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ABSTRACT

In 1995-1996, the United Kingdom's Further Education Development Agency examined approaches to delivery of career education/guidance in further education (FE) programs and the roles of career service and college staff in career education/guidance. Data were collected through surveys of approximately 450 colleges in England and Wales and 28 career services. Responses were received from 215 (47.7%) of the colleges and 25 (89%) of the career services. Case studies of 12 colleges demonstrating indications of good practice/development and representing a geographically and institutionally diverse sample were also conducted. The following were among the study's main findings: the work of FE guidance staff is being greatly affected by increasing variation in the student population; nearly three-fourths of institutions have written policies on career education/guidance; student satisfaction surveys are the most popular method of evaluating guidance provision; tutorial groups are the preferred means of delivering career education/guidance; interest in accrediting career education/guidance programs (particularly through General National Vocational Qualifications) is evident; and approximately three-fourths of FE colleges and two-thirds of sixth-form colleges employ at least one career specialist. (Appended are the following: study methodology; checklist for reviewing career education/guidance for FE students; and 11 references.) (MN)

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ED 404 511

FEDA Further Education Development Agency

On course for next steps:
careers education and guidance for students in FE

Jackie Sadler & Anna Reisenberger

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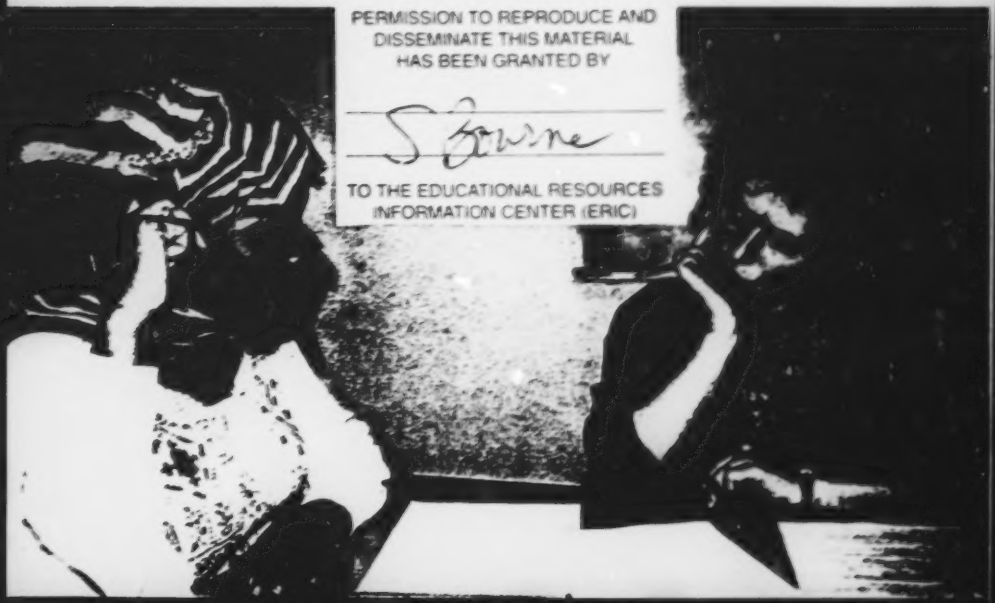

DEVELOPING FE

FEDA report

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FEDA Further Education Development Agency

On course for next steps: careers education and guidance for students in FE

Jackie Sadler and Anna Reisenberger

Developing FE (FEDA reports)

Developing FE is a new journal produced by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA). It succeeds the Coombe Lodge Reports previously produced by The Staff College. Each issue focuses on a single theme and is a key reference text for those involved with management and curriculum in post-compulsory education.

This is the report of a project jointly funded by the Further Education Development Agency and the Department for Education and Employment.

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Colleges visited for case studies

Barnsley College
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies
Gateshead College
Llandrillo College
Manchester College of Arts and Technology
Palmer's College
Preston College
Shrewsbury Sixth-Form College
South Devon College
Telford College of Arts and Technology
Tile Hill College
Wakefield College

Chapter 1

Executive summary

Introduction

Between October 1995 and July 1996 the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) investigated the approaches taken by colleges in the FE sector to:

- the delivery of careers education and guidance for students on programme and preparing for exit
- the roles of careers service and college staff in this process

Findings are based on two surveys and visits to 12 colleges. One survey looked at guidance provision in the FE sector, including sixth-form colleges, and the other looked at a sample of 28 careers service providers. There were high response rates, representative of the profile of the FE sector, but those who responded may tend towards better practice.

Changes affecting the work of FE guidance staff

Both careers services and college staff suggested that the greater variation in the student population was having a major effect on their work. In response, both have developed new programmes — group work, etc. However, while 72% of colleges also considered the introduction of GNVQs a significant influence, their introduction had less impact on the careers services. This may indicate that careers staff are less aware of the opportunities GNVQs offer to integrate careers education into the curriculum.

New careers service contracts are having a considerable effect on guidance provision and on the allocation of careers staff to FE: contracted careers services are perceived both as a threat and an opportunity by college staff. Service Level agreements (SLAs) provide a focus for reviewing the roles and responsibilities of careers and college staff and for ensuring that the work of one complements that of the other.

Quality policy development

Nearly three quarters of institutions have a written policy on careers education and guidance: sixth-form colleges are less likely to specify entitlements for part-time students and will need to address this if they propose to extend their traditional markets. Most policies have been formulated with careers service providers and specify how they are to be implemented, rather than monitored. Less than half of all institutions specify how impartiality is to be assured. While there may now be a greater understanding of 'impartiality' in institutions, there is evidence that this may often not be documented or shared throughout the institution. Assuring impartiality on programme means that students who wish to change course or leave the institution have access to independent advice encompassing the range of appropriate opportunities.

Quality frameworks

Only about half the careers education and guidance policies specify that staff should work within agreed quality standards. Colleges:

- are at very different stages of development in relation to agreeing, drafting and adopting quality frameworks, or developing service standards, rather than letting staff work to their own codes of principles or conduct
- may be further advanced in developing quality standards if the staff have been involved with external initiatives
- are more likely to set targets than performance indicators
- are investigating and piloting kitemarking schemes

Monitoring and evaluation

The most popular way of evaluating guidance provision is through student satisfaction surveys. The appropriateness and effectiveness of the provision; the contribution of the careers service and college; and equal opportunities were also being addressed by over 50% of all institutions. Some colleges, however, may not be monitoring the take up and usage of the guidance provision and facilities enough to inform future planning. Less than a quarter of colleges are evaluating the cost-effectiveness or value added of the careers education and guidance provision. Colleges may need to develop ways of assessing the contribution guidance can make to retention, achievement and progression into appropriate destinations.

Delivery of on-programme guidance

The preferred means of delivering careers education and guidance for all programmes and age groups is through tutorial groups. Some colleges have been auditing their tutorial provision, working with tutors and accrediting or unitising tutorial programmes.

Cross-college programmes are most likely to be provided for 16-19 students on GCSE, A-level and GNVQ courses. Careers education is most likely to be embedded in the curriculum for 16-19 GNVQ students (and those on vocational programmes). Work experience has generally little connection with guidance specialists. Key constraints on developing careers education are the difficulty of ensuring consistency of delivery, the lack of resources and the lack of time in training programmes. Guidance also needs to be linked across the stages, from pre-entry to exit.

Only about half the institutions use destination data to plan careers education. There is often less emphasis on preparation for work than in HE, but some institutions are trying to improve group support for students seeking direct entry to employment. There is also concern in the sector that students on one-year programmes are not prepared early enough for entry to work. In an era of lifelong learning, everyone needs adequate foundation training in the skills required to access both work and learning opportunities.

Developing guidance in the curriculum

There is clear evidence of interest in accrediting careers education programmes, through open college accreditation or by integrating careers education within the curriculum, particularly through GNVQ units.

Some institutions and careers services are setting up coherent systems, which allow information on student progress and career intentions to be shared while taking account of client confidentiality. However a number of careers staff dismissed the introduction of records of achievement (ROAs) as having no impact on their work. This could mean that students are duplicating rather than building on previous action planning.

Information in careers education and guidance

Evidence from the project suggests that:

- guidance staff are developing materials, such as careers and job packs, internally and in some cases marketing them to other institutions
- in most cases careers libraries are reviewed and updated annually and increasing use is made of a range of computer packages and databases
- students are starting to show a marked preference for accessing information through computer packages, rather than through the library

Colleges use a range of mechanisms for collecting destination data. Some have developed coherent systems with their careers service to collect and share data while others still need to review their procedures to avoid duplication and to link the collection of data to the guidance process at whatever point the student leaves the institution. Most institutions use destination data to market the institution's provision and record achievement.

The roles of careers service and college staff

Students come into contact with a large number of staff offering some form of guidance. Approximately three quarters of FE colleges and two thirds of sixth-form colleges employ at least one careers specialist. Over half the colleges have a member of staff from the careers services based in the institutions for at least 25% of their time. Approximately one sixth of FE colleges have staff seconded from the careers service.

Focus of activities

In some cases there is a clear distinction between the role of the college and careers service staff but where colleges have recruited their own qualified guidance specialists, there is likely to be a greater overlap. Colleges may need to map the activities undertaken by all those involved in careers education and guidance to avoid duplication. Over three quarters of careers service staff think their work is valued by some or most of the colleges in which they work.

Careers services are likely to consider their work with clients, both individual and groups, to be the most effective aspect of their careers guidance provision but most colleges consider that the prime responsibility for on-programme and pre-exit interviews and action planning with 16-19 year students rests with college staff. College staff were more likely to see the careers service taking the lead in providing information on the labour market and job vacancies. Colleges could benefit from making more use of careers service expertise in the labour market in designing programmes to prepare students for work.

Most careers services support colleges more broadly through:

- providing year 11 destination data
- assisting them to review and update their library and by providing software support
- advising on the development of careers education and guidance
- delivering staff development for college staff

Most careers services were providing labour market information (LMI) to their colleges; but few were assisting them to interpret it. Information needs to be produced in an accessible form for both tutors and students. Specialist college staff may also be able to develop centralised systems, which draw on all sources of labour market information, including that available from the careers service, tutors (particularly on vocational programmes), work experience co-ordinators, etc. The few careers

providers charging for these services are more likely to be contracted-out rather than those services.

Responsibility for particular client groups

Careers services are likely to prioritise work with full-time students between 16-19. Where there is provision for part-time students, it often relies on students taking the initiative and may not be available to evening students. Adults and part-time students are more likely to be excluded from the SLA (16-19s are the priority group within DfEE contracts) and this may not reflect the needs of a sector in which over 70% of the students are adults. The evidence suggests that careers services continue to provide specialists to support students with learning difficulties and disabilities. These will either be included in the SLA or under their own agreement.

Take-up of provision is likely to be lower among part-time students, some groups of adults and students on vocational and one-year course but higher amongst those applying for higher education (HE), both A-level and Access programmes. Perhaps guidance provision is perceived as targeted at HE.

Students excluded from the SLAs are most likely to be supported by tutors and college specialists. HE students may be assisted through links to the relevant HE institution. Colleges may need to monitor and review their provision for excluded groups. There may be some provision integrated in the curriculum or delivered through a tutorial programme. Advisers also need access to the necessary specialist information and networks to support their work.

Allocation and take up of provision

The main obstacle to working in the FE sector cited by careers services staff is the difficulty of internal communication in large and complex institutions. This includes identifying and accessing appropriate staff. It

is not surprising then, that working relationships with college staff are likely to be better in the actual delivery of guidance than in sharing information and communicating about client needs.

Careers staff report that take-up of their provision is significantly better in schools and (usually smaller) sixth-form colleges than in FE colleges. This could be because some FE students and tutors (e.g. on vocational courses) do not see the need for careers guidance and also because school students are more likely to keep interview appointments. Where careers services have to meet targets, this may encourage them to give priority to institutions, where they can be sure to do so.

Staff development and support

Most careers service staff working in FE are supported in their work by local post-16 networks and staff development activities organised by the college. However, only just over half the careers services provide any induction programme, although an adequate introduction and understanding of how FE operates are clearly important.

Increasing numbers of specialist college staff are trained guidance workers. Two thirds indicated that they were continuing their professional development, most frequently through attending accredited courses and external conferences, undertaking visits to opportunity providers and networking.

Colleges support their tutors in a variety of ways, including networking, briefing meetings and written materials for tutorial work. Thirty-nine per cent of FE colleges and 52% of sixth-form colleges also indicated that they provided in-service training for tutors, delivered in some cases by careers service staff. Some college specialists suggested that tutor development was key to the development of guidance for students in transition. All the careers services surveyed were carrying out staff development for at least some of their colleges. Joint training may offer access to NVQs for support and front-line staff.

Recommendations

Colleges should:

- develop guidance policies with standards, targets and performance indicators, underpinned by codes of practice and self-assessment processes
- ensure greater consistency and coherence for students by mapping the components of careers education and guidance
- give students more preparation for entry into work and lifelong learning
- give more attention to students on HE and one-year courses
- work with careers services to ensure that guidance builds on previous action planning and guidance activities
- map the roles and responsibilities of careers service staff, college specialists and non-specialists
- develop internal and external networks
- co-ordinate their staff development

Careers services should:

- review their allocation of time to post-16 institutions
- work in partnership with colleges in drawing up and reviewing SLAs and development plans
- provide induction for staff working in FE colleges and work collaboratively to develop careers education

National bodies should:

- place more emphasis in their funding and inspection mechanisms on preparing students for their next steps
- undertake more research into students' experience of guidance and careers education

Chapter 2

Background to the research study

The 'On course' project was undertaken by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) in conjunction with the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) between October 1995 and June 1996 to identify the different ways in which colleges deliver careers education and guidance on-programme and at exit, and to explore the roles of college and careers service staff. The research methodology is set out in Appendix 1.

This report contains the main finding of two surveys of the FE sector and a sample of careers services together with examples from good practice case studies and issues identified by staff and students. The surveys achieved high response rates, representative of the profile of the FE sector, but it is possible that the findings therefore tend towards better practice.

On course provides a benchmark, against which colleges can set their current practice, with recommendations for improving provision. It will be of particular interest to student services and guidance managers in colleges, and careers service staff with a responsibility for post-16 provision.

For the purposes of the study, the broad definitions of careers education and careers guidance laid down by DfEE in *Better Choices* were used:

> *Careers education is a means of developing individuals' knowledge and understanding of self, role and opportunities in education, training and employment. It helps them develop the skills necessary to obtain and handle information, be realistic (but ambitious) about personal capabilities and aspirations and make informed decisions about future choices.*
>
> *Careers education is provided through a progressive programme that is an integral part of the wider curriculum.*
>
> *Careers guidance is a means of helping individuals apply their knowledge, skills and information to make realistic choices and appropriate decisions about future options. It offers opportunities for reviewing learning, assessing, setting new goals and recording achievements in a variety of areas.*
>
> *Effective guidance places the interests of the individual before those of the institution and other opportunity providers. It is progressive, impartial, confidential and accessible.*

The research context

The research was undertaken during a period of rapid change in the FE sector: curriculum innovations like GNVQs, greater integration of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and more emphasis on diagnostic assessment, key skills, learning agreements and initial guidance, retention and achievement. The incorporation of colleges in 1993 coincided with the phased contracting out of careers services from LEA control. New relationships had to be forged between the institutions, with the *Requirements and Guidance for Careers Service Providers* giving clear advice on what should be provided for post-16 students.

The rapid growth in the numbers and variety of students staying in post-compulsory education has also changed the traditional work of careers services. There are now about the same number of 16 year olds in both colleges and schools and almost the same number of A levels in both sectors. The college population is over 70% adult, and mainly part time.

Figure 1: Better Choices

Ten principles for good quality careers education and guidance in schools and colleges:

1. A co-ordinated approach to the management of pupil and student development.
2. A written whole school/college careers education and guidance policy statement.
3. Management training for headteachers and principals to include careers, education and guidance.
4. Clearly defined school/college senior management support, including a named person responsible for careers education and guidance.
5. A comprehensive service level agreement with the careers service.
6. Sufficient resources to ensure the delivery of an effective programme.
7. A planned programme of careers education and guidance with measurable targets which ensure individual progression.
8. Annual review and evaluation.
9. Regular input from governors, parents, employers, training providers and others.
10. Planned in-service training for teachers, lecturers and careers advisers

from *Better Choices: the Principles (DfEE November 1994)*

The range of student groups, programmes areas, staffing and college structures can make it difficult to achieve coherence and consistency of delivery in FE colleges in comparison, for example, to the school sector. The project was therefore interested in how both directed and newly contracted-out careers services were interpreting their roles in colleges, which were more explicitly laid out in the *Requirements and Guidance for Providers*.

During 1995-6, the DfEE undertook the first two performance assessment reviews by using a national sample of careers services, including an analysis of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with educational institutions. While this report does include some data on the extent to which specific groups are included in the SLAs, it was not a main focus for the study. One of the recommendations from the performance assessment review was that 'careers service senior managers should satisfy themselves that they are offering and agreeing an appropriate range of services to all types of institutions in their SLAs'.

In 1996 the FEFC Inspectorate was also preparing a good practice guide on careers education and guidance, drawing on their inspection data and selected visits. Care was taken that the FEDA case studies did not overlap with FEFC visits; nonetheless readers will find that the two publications complement each other, and reach similar conclusions.

Chapter 3

Changes influencing careers education and guidance in colleges

Both colleges and careers services were asked about changes affecting their provision. Careers services identified the following as having the most impact:

- greater competition between schools and FE
- the introduction of the new careers service contracts
- greater variation in the student population (e.g. more adults)

FE colleges reported that changes in the student population were having a major effect on their work, both on content and delivery. This had less effect on sixth-form colleges.

Service level agreements (SLAs), increasing student numbers, and the introduction of new technologies are also having some impact on careers services' work. The developments which careers services indicated had had the least effect were:

- the introduction of action planning and the recording of achievement
- curriculum innovations

- the introduction of new technologies for the delivery of careers education and guidance

College perceptions differed:

- 72% identified the introduction of GNVQs as a major influence on the *content* of careers education and guidance
- 64% identified it as a major influence on the *delivery* of careers education and guidance
- 52% identified the introduction of the recording of achievement /individual action planning (ROA/IAP) process as a main influence on delivery

Where some careers staff are less aware of the impact of curriculum developments such as GNVQ, other, linked, staff may be unable to exploit opportunities to integrate careers education and guidance into the curriculum. Similarly, services and colleges need to share information about student progress and career intentions, with due attention to client confidentiality. Given the emphasis on the development of IT and computer-assisted guidance (CAG) in the survey, it is surprising that careers services do not identify new technologies as having greater impact.

Other developments affecting the work of guidance staff in colleges include:

- the need to increase retention and achievement
- changes in the education and training structures
- the changing labour market at local, national and international level
- the introduction of the 16-hour rule/job seekers' allowance (JSA) particularly in FE colleges
- the introduction of new technologies

Less than half the institutions identified the need to prepare individuals for lifelong learning as having any effect on either content or delivery .

Careers services reported a range of innovations in response to developments affecting their provision and two thirds of all the colleges surveyed have been introducing changes. Of these, 65% in sixth-form and 39% in FE colleges have been developing their IT and/ or multi-media provision for use in guidance. Other main developments in colleges include:

- increased programmes and provision for adults
- developing IAP/ROA and learning plans
- increased tutor involvement/formalisation of the tutor programme
- greater integration of careers education and guidance into the curriculum
- increased group work

Recommendation

- Colleges and careers services should regularly review their careers education and guidance provision in the light of external changes and curriculum innovation, and set out development plans to update their services.

Chapter 4
Quality and impartiality

Quality

Policy development

Seventy-one per cent of the colleges surveyed indicated that they had a written policy on careers education and guidance; with considerably more (87%) sixth-form colleges than FE colleges (66%), but sixth-form colleges are less likely to specify entitlements for both full- and part-time students. Nearly all careers services have an entitlement for some or all students in post-16 institutions, including both sixth forms and FE colleges.

Policies in FE colleges are likely to have been developed as part of a Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) network, from the work of professional bodies, or derived from the FEFC inspection framework. Two thirds of colleges reported that their policies had been formulated with careers service providers, whereas careers services indicated that just under half of their entitlements were formulated in consultation with their colleges. Significantly, only about half of the institutions

specify how their policy is to be monitored. While most colleges do not indicate in their policies what provision there is for following up those who leave early, over half indicated that such guidance provision existed.

Developing quality frameworks and standards

Colleges are in very different stages of development in relation to agreeing, drafting and adopting a quality framework. Some are still investigating what to draw on to customise their own framework (often using external links): in some cases staff are working to professional codes of practice, but have not adopted service standards. In three quarters of the institutions surveyed, the internal quality assurance policy covered guidance, but only just over half specified agreed quality standards.

Colleges visited were developing the following approaches to quality:

- developing a quality framework from *Better Choices*
- drawing on work already undertaken by professional associations
- setting quality standards for information, (which were reviewed annually)
- using standards' frameworks drawn up by careers services
- using service standards, (which were linked to TVEI standards and needed updating) and written guidelines for the guidance staff
- producing a quality manual for student services

In some institutions quality audits are undertaken for all areas, including student services.

Developing Quality Standards

The approach in one college, initially to setting standards for guidance, was to link with the 'quality characteristics of the student's learning experience', which were drawn up by the academic board. The two most appropriate for the on-programme and on-exit stages were identified as:

- *' all students have access to the range of support/ resources / services required to achieve a successful outcome', and*
- *'the college actively supports students to progress from their learning programme'*

The whole guidance team were involved in:

- *drawing up the standards, describing realistic targets*
- *agreeing on the evidence required to show that the standard had been achieved, and on the measures, monitoring methods and responsibilities*

This has created ownership and awareness for all involved. A service manual was written for inspection purposes.

The guidance team use the standards consistently, both informally to colour the ethos of the service provided, and more formally to demonstrate the quality of their provision. There is an awareness of the need to extend the standards, developed for the work of the guidance specialists, to encompass tutorial staff delivering on-programme.

Monitoring quality standards has contributed to on-programme improvements in the provision for students on HE programmes.

Most of the institutions visited had not set performance indicators (PIs), as such, for their staff, but rather, broad targets. One institution had set PIs through the quality standards for the guidance team, which were

being reviewed. Another set its own quantitative targets (e.g. to increase group work) and was following the FEFC self-assessment PIs.

One institution was considering customising the Leeds careers service's Careers Partnership Award. This initiative was introduced in 1994 to develop a framework for defining quality standards in careers education and guidance, focusing on work in schools. It comprises six modules:

- career action planning
- experience of the world of work
- careers education and guidance within whole school policy
- the careers education and guidance programme, JIG-CAL
- job ideas and career plans
- careers information provision

In one case, Investors in People (IiP) was providing a focus for monitoring the quality framework and the TEC was monitoring the Gateway standards. Monitoring was also being undertaken by internal quality units.

There is some interest in the FE sector in kitemarking guidance provision. Active marketing of the Investors in Careers (IiC) initiative throughout the country, (see below) has resulted in other careers services buying into it, and at least one college with existing standards and IiP is piloting it. Other kitemarking schemes are being developed, and there may be a need to ensure that quality frameworks and systems remain coherent, if kitemarks start to proliferate. The National Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (NACCEG) has recently produced a Code of Principles, which applies across the guidance settings, and it is working to establish a generic quality framework, linking work on quality development across the different sectors.

Figure 2: The National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance - The code of principles

This code has been agreed by all parties involved in the guidance process. The six principles are interdependent and the code is designed to be applied in its entirety.

Impartiality
Guidance should be impartial. Providers should be able to demonstrate a claim that they offer an impartial service, or declare factors which might limit the impartiality of the guidance offered to the individual. This includes provision reflecting the vested interests of the providers, and/or the provision of incomplete information on opportunities for learning and work.

Confidentiality
The guidance process should be confidential, and this should be made clear to the individual. Personal information should not be passed on without the individual's prior permission. Any limitations on this should be made absolutely clear at the earliest possible stage.

Individual ownership
The guidance process should be focused on the needs of the individual, whose interests are paramount.

Equality of opportunity
Equality of opportunity should underpin all aspects of provision, including activities and behaviour of the provider, and the opportunities to which the guidance process leads. Providers should be able to demonstrate how they provide equality of opportunity.

Transparency
The guidance process itself should be open and transparent. Guidance providers should explain in clear language, appropriate to the individual, how they propose to work in their part of the process.

Accessibility
Guidance services should publicise, signpost and make the delivery of guidance accessible to any eligible user. This includes stating target clientele, availability and other relevant relevant arrangements, clearly, in appropriate languages, locations and publications.

NACCEG (March 1996)

Investors in Careers

Investors in Careers (IiC) is an initiative being developed by Cornwall and Devon Careers Ltd, which is closely modelled on Investors in People (IiP). The careers company is working with some of its local schools and colleges to help them to develop their provision to gain this kitemark. It involves:

- *giving a commitment to careers education and guidance through a policy and development plan*
- *the identification of organisational requirements, resources and staffing*
- *a commitment to delivering careers education and guidance to meet the needs of individual students in line with entitlements and policy*
- *regular review and evaluation*

One local college views the advantages of involvement as:

- *a way of securing quality in guidance provision across the institution*
- *a means of gaining commitment from senior management*
- *an opportunity to raise the status of careers education and guidance amongst lecturing staff and personal tutors*
- *a potential marketing tool for parents, employers and students, demonstrating the importance attached by the college to careers education and guidance*

Gaining IiC status is expected to take approximately 18 months. The first step is a simple audit of students and staff using performance indicators identified by the IiC as an audit instrument. The main gap in this institution's guidance offer is a planned careers education programme. Their main concern is to develop their work consistently across the college. The profile of careers

provision will be raised through re-siting it to a more central location on campus.

Recommendation

Colleges need to develop guidance policies, accessible to students and parents as well as staff, which cover all relevant activities with standards, targets and performance indicators. Careers services and local networks can provide valuable frameworks and codes of practice.

Impartiality

Different approaches

Impartiality is a contentious issue in any discussion about guidance in FE. In any educational institution it is possible to identify different vested interests which could influence the interaction between a student, or potential student, and the adviser or tutor. For example:

- between different tutors delivering the same subject within the same institution
- between different departments within the same institution
- between the institution and external competitors

Impartiality of the guidance provision is often seen as more of an issue at pre-entry or entry stage in colleges, when students are more likely to be making choices between institutions or programmes. This is where schools accuse colleges of aggressive marketing and colleges complain that schools do not give them fair access to 16 year olds. Once students are on a college programme, guidance staff and tutors will be offering guidance to potential drop-outs. They may both play a role in offering guidance on option choices, particularly with increasing modularisation of the curriculum. As students prepare for their next stage, the options may be HE, employment or specialist training, very likely outside the FE

institution, so 'partial' guidance is less of an issue. Most discussions about impartiality in FE still focus on the entry phase.

The survey results indicate that only 41% of institutions and 33% of sixth-form colleges address how to ensure impartiality within their policies. Four colleges visited indicated that staff were working within an ethical framework, which included impartiality: this did not always appear to be documented but was considered to be part of the college ethos. Two indicated that impartiality was included in their quality standards. Just under half indicated that there was an agreed understanding of impartiality across the institution. Others were unsure how far their definition could be described as shared by all staff. One commented that 'there are different levels of understanding and interpretation', although 'there is now more impartiality in departments'. Some staff see their role as champion of the student; impartial between departments as much as between institutions.

Achievement-led funding, the need to increase retention, the FEFC requirement for impartiality in audit evidence for entry guidance and the FE charter's requirement for impartial information and advice have all encouraged a focus on impartiality. However an Open University study of three London colleges found that there were widely differing understandings of the term. The project visits showed that developing an agreed definition of impartiality amongst guidance specialists may be influenced by:

- staff involvement in external networking and membership of professional associations
- participation in external initiatives, where quality of the provision has been considered and incorporated into standards
- staff with previous experience in community-based services, such as the careers or educational guidance services, which have service or professional codes of practice, e.g. Institute of

Careers Guidance (ICG), National Association of Educational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA)

It is significant that all the colleges FEDA selected as case studies of good practice were subsequently found to have qualified careers advisers or guidance specialists. One sixth-form college had adopted the Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG) definition of impartiality. In one FE college the guidance specialists had all worked as careers officers and had drafted their own code of practice for the Admissions and Guidance team. Staff in another FE college, which had worked within Gateways to Learning had been audited on the basis of local standards from the TEC initiative.

Definitions developed by the guidance team may not always be shared across the institution, but some guidance staff are attempting to influence perceptions across college. One guidance specialist had drafted a definition of guidance, stressing impartiality and confidentiality, which was accepted by her line manager and introduced to tutors during a staff development event.

The research focused on staff perceptions of impartiality but consideration should also be given to student understanding of the need for access to 'independent' advice. If in the past the careers service has been seen as the 'honest broker' in the institutional context, will an increase in college-funded careers staff affect student perceptions? There is a potential dilemma for careers service staff and also for college guidance specialists. On one hand they may wish to maximise influence through involvement in college activities and be viewed as an integral part of the team; on the other they may wish to keep a certain distance and independence.

Impartiality within on-programme guidance

Questions of impartiality in guidance may arise when a student wishes to change course or leave the institution. In such cases, specialist staff considered that access to independent advice, covering the range of internal and external options was a key indicator of impartiality. In 46%

of the colleges where policies included provision for following up students who dropped out, students were offered a careers guidance interview, and 8% of those were specifically with the careers service.

Other factors which could influence the impartiality of on-programme guidance include:

- the increased importance of retaining students in the college
- lack of access to careers service staff for some college students, particularly where there are few or no specialist college staff with knowledge of a broad range of learning opportunities and/or access to information on both internal and external learning options
- problems experienced by the careers service in accessing college students

These concerns were raised by careers service providers who commented as follows in relation to the problems in working in the FE sector:

> *FE colleges are now independent and there are few control mechanisms if access is denied*

> *there is a conflict between the colleges' need for retention and impartiality towards clients*

> *competition for students is threatening our independent status*

Careers service staff also value the impartiality which they feel they bring to careers education and guidance within colleges: a few services indicated that this was the most effective aspect of their work. On the other hand some college staff are concerned that the emphasis on achieving targets for completed action plans may compromise independent careers services.

Integrating impartiality into working practices

Most institutions had addressed 'impartiality' in their staff support and development programmes in ways that included: training in asking open questions; linking impartiality to the Charter requirements; attending external staff development events, and ensuring that a variety of college programmes are visited and appropriate training records kept.

Impartiality has also been incorporated into working practices by:

- ensuring that mention of impartiality is always included in appropriate documentation (e.g. service team manual, procedures file, college's quality manual)
- advising students at the beginning of each interview with specialist college staff of:
  - their entitlement to an interview with the careers service representative if they wish
  - the principles of impartiality and confidentiality within which the interview is conducted
  - their ownership of their career action plan, which does not need to be shown to their tutor
- ensuring that interviews with college specialists challenge /expand students' initial choice, so that a range of opportunities have been considered
- ensuring that the range of HE options is included in careers education programmes
- ensuring that available information on learning and work opportunities is comprehensive, and includes a range of institutions
- organising and delivering joint presentations to local schools with a neighbouring FE college
- informing parents that the careers adviser's salary is paid by the careers service

- monitoring:
- college application forms
- samples of college and careers action plans (e.g. at induction) for examples of appropriate referrals

Impact on institutional ethos

The research indicates that discussions about impartiality are taking place in institutions and influencing college ethos, but they are not necessarily being documented. A commitment to impartiality may be written into careers education and guidance policy, without any indication as to how this is to be monitored and without an agreed understanding across the institution as to what it actually means.

Most of the institutions visited maintained that impartiality of guidance had been addressed with senior management. In one case, the understanding on impartiality within the institution had emanated from a previous vice principal. One careers adviser, recruited from the local careers service, raised the issue of impartiality at her selection interview, in the presence of the vice principal. Another felt that senior management particularly valued the feedback provided by a careers adviser, who could be impartial between the college departments.

Recommendation

Concepts of impartiality should be discussed in colleges in order to reach a shared understanding and then embedded through policy statements, codes of practice, entitlement statements and guidelines for staff on implementation and monitoring.

Monitoring and evaluation

Many colleges monitor take up of guidance, the use of careers libraries and student destinations (see chapters 6 and 8) but few routinely record

guidance enquiries and outcomes, from action plans or other records, and use the data to evaluate provision or influence development plans.

Areas being evaluated

Nine out of ten colleges evaluate guidance provision through student satisfaction surveys. User feedback clearly influences most institutions, and some students reported that they were being 'surveyed to death'! Concern about 'questionnaire overload' was also raised by staff who wanted to survey students on their perceptions of the guidance team's services. Student feedback is gained from students using student perception of course (SPOC) and quality questionnaires, often in co-operation with the quality assurance (QA) unit or equivalent. One institution visited had a questionnaire which linked questions to the charter; others also used post-interview and post-induction questionnaires.

One college introducing a new accredited tutorial programme, was devising an evaluation system which would include obtaining qualitative feedback from groups of students as well as checking their progress through the programme. Feedback from different groups of students showed that tutors using centrally produced materials were still offering very different quality of careers education through tutorials. This was followed up with the tutors concerned.

Careers services were also interested in collecting student feedback: it was one of the two aspects of the provision most likely to be evaluated. Most of the careers services were involved in evaluating careers education and guidance provision in the FE sector: sometimes just their own provision but sometimes jointly with the institution concerned.

Colleges also considered that 'effectiveness', the 'appropriateness' of provision' and 'the contribution of the careers service' were important areas of evaluation. Much less weight was attached to the value-added contribution of guidance, which was only addressed by a quarter of colleges and 19% of careers services.

One college visited indicated that it was interested in using software to link careers guidance to the college's management information system (MIS) for more information on outcomes and to track student progress and the impact of course choice and changes. This should enable it to assess the value added of the guidance process. Another was monitoring on-programme delivery via guidance tracking and tutor review. A third was in the early stages of assessing value added by tracking students after Gateways and pre-Access interviews.

Two other colleges were considering the relationship between the value added of guidance and retention. In one case the registry had been looking particularly at the link between an increase in retention and an increase in student support: staff had identified students at risk, who had been given extra assistance.

Changes resulting from evaluation

Approximately two thirds of colleges and a third of careers services detailed changes, which had been made as a result of evaluation. For careers services these included:

- enhancing information and publicity
- refocusing resources
- reviewing tutor training

In the FE sector, the most frequent changes were:

- the appointment of new staff
- the enhancement of careers information
- developments in IT and computer-assisted guidance
- increased careers service involvement

Recommendations

- Colleges should set up procedures and identify staff responsible for monitoring take-up and outcomes by student age, gender, curriculum area, etc.
- Policies and provision should be evaluated regularly for effectiveness against service level agreements, indicators and targets, and action plans drawn up to remedy shortcomings or to develop provision.
- The views of staff as well as students should be sought.

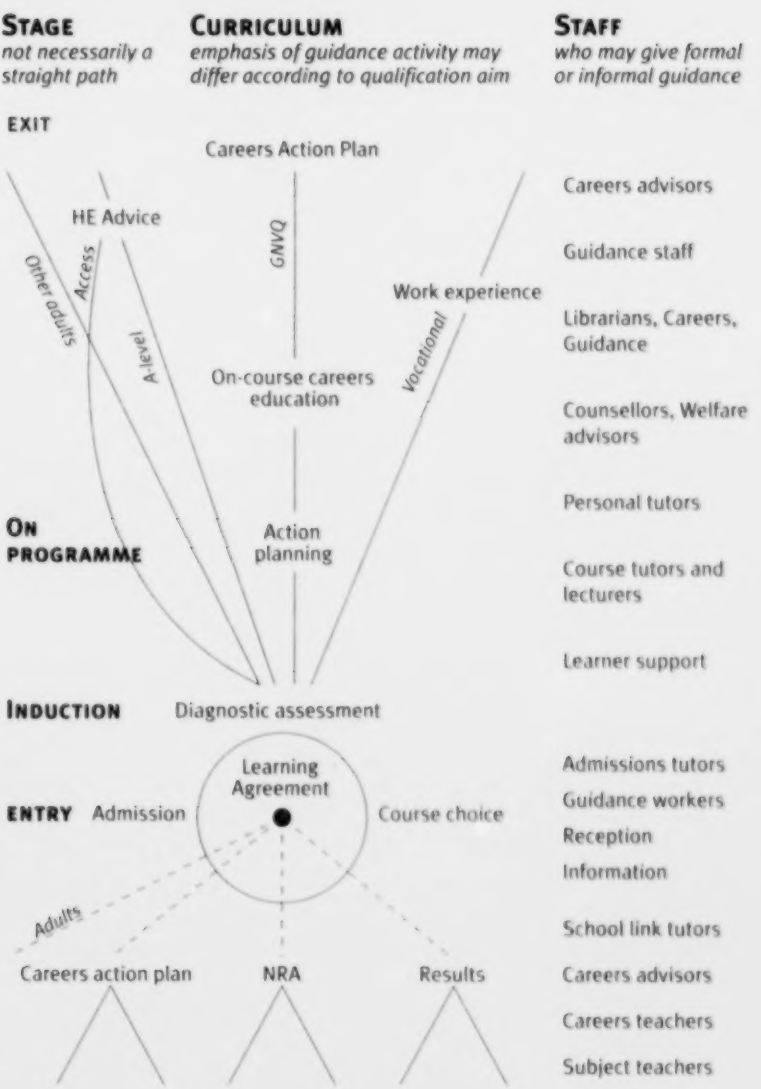
Chapter 5

Staff roles and responsibilities in institutions

Guidance is an ongoing process, not a single interaction. Students come into contact with a wide variety of staff who give them informal and formal careers education and guidance. While this study focused on professional advisers in careers services and colleges, and personal tutors, there are also front-line staff, e.g. subject lecturers and admissions tutors who offer guidance on learning and work options, or help students develop the skills to make successful transitions.

Specialist staff need to be aware of the importance to the student of non-specialist interventions, and the potential for confusing messages. People outside the institution are also key influences on students. One college visited had set up a guidance council, an internal network of all those interested in guidance issues, which met regularly to review provision. The council also acted as a catalyst for staff development. It can be argued that guidance is an element of all learning experiences and that all staff should have some basic training in guidance issues, if only to know their own limitations and when to refer students to specialists.

Figure 3: A coherent pathway for the learner?



Where careers education and guidance functions are dispersed, it is particularly important to ensure coherence for the learner through simple and effective administrative systems, through links between student support services and curriculum delivery, and through development of skills to help the student become a more autonomous learner.

Specialist staffing

About three quarters of all FE colleges, and about two thirds of sixth-form colleges employ at least one specialist in careers education and guidance. Of these, approximately 80% in both types of institution employ up to three specialist staff. One sixth-form college employing its own careers adviser thought this had helped communication between the college and careers service provider. Sixth-form colleges are much less likely than FE colleges to have staff seconded from the careers service provider.

Contracting out and rising student numbers have provided an opportunity to review and change the allocation of careers service staff to FE colleges. Some careers services reported that they had increased the level of staff working in the FE sector. Half the sixth-form colleges and 61% of FE colleges indicated that a member of the careers service staff was based for at least a quarter of their time in the college. In some cases, a proportion of the careers adviser's time is allocated to the college by the careers service provider, and an additional allocation purchased by the college from the careers service. In one college, for example, the careers service has allocated 90 days and an additional 55 are bought by the college. This enables the careers adviser to support the development of careers education and guidance outside the SLA, for example, by working with students on HE programmes supporting the development of careers education in the curriculum. Increased time in the college can also increase careers officer visibility, enabling closer integration into the college guidance team and raising the profile of careers work within the institution.

Responses from careers services suggest that nearly half (42%) allocate less provision to colleges than schools even, when account is taken of differences in size. However, the number of 16-18 students in the institution and careers service targets appear to have a significant effect on resource allocation decisions. Careers services provision was much better in sixth-form colleges than FE colleges. There was concern that targets may not easily be met in the FE colleges. Careers services gave the following reasons for poor take-up:

- careers staff find it more difficult to access students in larger FE colleges than in smaller sixth-form colleges, where they may know all the tutorial staff
- some FE students and tutors do not perceive a need for guidance, e.g. students on vocational courses may have already 'made choices'
- students are scattered over a number of sites
- FE students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own learning

Careers advisers have to rely more on self-referral in institutions where students are not allocated an interview as part of the careers education and guidance provision.

The roles and responsibilities of college staff

Co-ordination of provision in sixth-form colleges is most likely to be undertaken by the head of careers or equivalent, or by the senior tutor / tutor co-ordinator. In FE colleges it is mostly likely to be undertaken by the head of student services, although there are some guidance co-ordinators. Tracking individual student progression may be a shared responsibility within institutions and is allocated to a range of roles including MIS officers. It is often seen as part of the tutorial role.

The research underlines the importance of tutors in the delivery of careers education and guidance on programme, particularly where there

are only one or two guidance specialists operating across a large institution. Tutors may be involved in both individual and group tutorials, as well as delivery through the curriculum. To operate effectively, they require basic guidance skills, understanding of the limitations of their own knowledge and experience and access to a referral system to other specialists. One FE college with its own specialist guidance team, reported that it was moving from a model of workshops led by the guidance team to tutor-led delivery with specialist support and advice. There are other examples of guidance specialists acting as consultants and tutors facing an expanding role.

Elsewhere, institutions are trying to increase the direct use of specialists, particularly supporting the tutorial programme by delivering workshops and seminars, in some cases linked to the increased use of IT for action planning.

The roles and responsibilities of careers service staff

In some cases, there is a clear distinction between the role of college staff and that of careers service staff. One FE college does all the pre-entry, entry and course changing guidance while the careers service staff prepare all students for exit. Where colleges have their own qualified guidance specialists there is likely to be greater overlap. The results of the college survey underline the extent to which college and careers staff are undertaking the same activities, even if the emphasis varies from one institution to the next. Where the careers service officer is fully integrated into the college guidance team, sharing the work, the role is expected to change with the new careers service emphasis on action plan targets. Another institution reported that the careers service now inputs much less into programmes and added that college staff may undertake more exit guidance in the future.

The research both from the visits and the college survey indicates that tutors and college specialist staff are more likely than careers service staff to deliver careers education and guidance to those on HE

programmes and to adults (outside the statutory entitlement group). However, a few careers services reported that in response to the variation in the student population and the rising numbers of mature students, they had developed or enhanced their work with adults, or introduced group work with them.

Careers service staff are more likely to concentrate on delivering guidance interviews than careers education, although they may contribute to the latter. Students sometimes prefer to talk to someone outside the college, who is viewed as more independent.

At one sixth-form college visited, the careers service adviser was used substantially for:

- job market information, both for students and for the careers library
- individual guidance to students

Although he also contributed to the college's conference on HE opportunities and internal staff development, this accounted for a very small proportion of his time.

Information from the college visits and survey indicates that the only two activities for which the careers service providers had the main responsibility (for both 16-19s and 19+ age groups, in sixth forms and colleges) were for providing:

- information on the labour market
- a job vacancy service

In over a third more cases, the prime responsibility for on-programme interviews and action planning with 16-19 year olds rested with the college staff. However, about 90% of the interviews and action planning pre-exit were done by careers staff. This division of responsibilities may not only reflect the perceived expertise of the careers service provider, but also the level of resource which realistically can be allocated to assist the institution.

Careers services responding to the survey, however, tended to view their work with clients as the most effective aspect of their careers education and guidance provision (both group and individual work). A few also cited their work on supporting entry into HE — whereas from the colleges' perspective, the survey findings tend rather to emphasise assistance with entry into work.

In addition to work with students, most careers services reported that they were supporting their colleges in various ways. They are all attending careers conventions, offering advice on the development of the careers education and guidance provision, providing year-11 destination data and delivering staff development to some or all of their colleges.

Nearly all were:

- providing a drop-in facility
- assisting to update or review the careers library
- providing software support
- providing LMI (although less than half were helping colleges to interpret it)

There are indications from the visits that the expertise of the careers service staff could be better used. They could contribute to quality standards' work, the development of guidance policy, evaluation frameworks, etc. As a result, some careers service staff are experiencing a certain amount of frustration, exacerbated when they are obliged to work within the confines of a SLA which does not allow for involvement in development work. Their contribution is particularly valuable to an institution without any trained guidance specialists.

Careers services seem to be treading carefully in charging for their expertise. Some charges were being levied by both contracted and directed careers services. The 14 contracted services were charging for nine services while the five directed services were charging for just two.

Colleges may need to map staff roles in the delivery of careers education and guidance to identify any duplication and gaps in provision.

Careers service-college collaboration

There appears to be relatively little joint working except for activities like updating careers information, computer-assisted guidance and developing careers education and guidance provision. A couple of services mentioned marketing and producing information in conjunction with post-16 providers. One large FE college reported that it undertakes joint planning, delivery and training with its careers service adviser. Some careers service providers with heavy caseloads indicated they may in the future franchise some of the production of their action plans to the colleges.

Results from the survey of careers services suggest that working relationships are more likely to be effective regarding the actual guidance provision delivery and less when sharing information and communicating about client needs. Over three quarters of careers services considered that most or all of the colleges valued their contribution but it was sometimes more difficult to generalise, because the value placed upon the careers service contribution varied so much within the institution itself. For example, general education and special needs tutors may welcome the involvement of the careers service more than vocational programmes tutors, where employer links are already well established.

The main problem for careers services in working in the FE sector is internal communication within colleges; it was cited by over half of those experiencing difficulties. The complexity and size of larger FE colleges can make it difficult for careers service staff to link into the necessary networks and systems within the internal guidance community (exacerbated sometimes by restructuring). One service commented:

'sixth-form colleges have a narrower age-range of students and a more limited range of courses, which enable easier access and a more straightforward focus for messages. FE colleges have a full range of students and a wide diversity of courses, on separate sites, which mean that a strong structured network for communication in all directions is required. Contributing to this and learning to use it is challenging and time consuming.'

Evidence from the surveys, visits and dissemination conference indicates that careers service targets are affecting working relationships between colleges and careers services. Where there is a good relationship, the college is helping the careers service to meet its targets, even, in one case, allowing 'action planning' with a group of students, for whom alternative guidance would have been more appropriate. The need to meet careers service targets, particularly the priority given to the 16-19 year olds in institutions with a majority of mature students, is having a detrimental effect on relationships. From the college perspective, careers staff are not providing a flexible enough service.

This dichotomy is reflected in college staff perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the careers education and guidance in their institutions: 24% considered that their relationship with the careers service and the quality of the careers provision were two of their greatest strengths, while 12% judged the inadequacy of the careers serivce contribution one of their greatest weaknesses. Possible changes within the careers service (i.e. where careers services are still directed rather than contracted) were also seen as a threat by a quarter of colleges, with a further five per cent indicating concern at possible careers service charges. At the same time, a quarter suggested that there would be opportunities to develop the provision:

- through establishing closer ties with the careers service
- because they had a new careers service provider
- because they had increased input from the careers service provider

SLAs between colleges and careers services are in place or under development, and may be negotiated, at departmental level or within

different programme areas. Evidence from the project suggests that the SLA has provided a useful mechanism for meshing the work of the college and careers service: one institution reported that its SLA requires the careers service and college to review each other's work and consider other ways of working together. Regular meetings between careers service and college staff also help to co-ordinate provision.

Responsibility for client groups

Colleges indicated that the following groups are most likely to be excluded from the SLA and so, not served by careers service staff:

- HE students
- those on part-time programmes
- adults
- those on non-schedule 2 programmes

Eleven per cent of colleges indicated that no groups were excluded and 14% that there was no important variation in the level of provision available to different groups. There is no evidence of students with learning difficulties and disabilities being excluded from SLAs: in a few cases they were covered by a separate agreement. In two per cent of cases adults or Access students were specifically included in the SLA. A few colleges also indicated that the amount of work or support for certain groups had decreased:

- less work with/support for part-time students (12%)
- less access for evening students (3%)
- less work with adults (5%)

One respondent reflected the widespread concern in colleges that their major client group, even those entitled to a careers service interview, is denied access because the priority for careers service targets is 16-19s:

the careers service contract will concentrate on 16 -19, whereas the college is 70% adult

These findings reflect the responses to the careers service survey, which indicated that:

- nearly three quarters of careers services concentrated on, or prioritised work with, full-time students
- in just under half the cases careers service provision was available to part-time students but often depended on them referring themselves
- nearly three quarters indicated that priority was given to the core 16-19 group, or that there was a reduced entitlement for older students

Responses from the college survey and visits indicate that college staff usually provide for groups outside the statutory entitlement group (as detailed in the next section): some institutions reported that the college and careers service were working in partnership to meet the needs of all students. However there are concerns that the provision may not be adequate to ensure effective and successful transitions, particularly if it depends on self-referral.

Information from the college visits indicates that they are supporting students on HE programmes by using:

- appropriate careers facilities within the college
- facilities of the linked HE institution (where close enough)
- the adviser from the linked careers service provider

Another college with IT expertise is hoping to use videoconferencing with the linked HE institution to support their HE students. This institution had also recently appointed an HE co-ordinator, who was intending to organise trips to HE fairs and bus students to linked HE institutions.

Other colleges, however, admitted that they could do more for HE students; one commented 'with the new careers service arrangements, nobody wants to own them'.

Recommendations

The roles and responsibilities of all college and visiting careers service staff should be mapped by both parties to avoid duplication and gaps and to ensure all students' needs are met. Both parties should agree how the expertise of careers service staff can be deployed most effectively .

Staff development

Support and development for college staff delivering careers education and guidance

Guidance specialists support tutors with:

- materials for tutorials, e.g. checklists
- information dissemination, e.g. reminders on application deadlines
- drip-feed information and updating on relevant issues, e.g. JSA
- briefings, e.g. from head of student services or equivalent
- support meetings — one college held longer tutor meetings at three or four critical points each year
- tutor/guidance networks in institutions
- tutor handbooks
- access to the resource bases
- through departmental links
- internal and external staff development

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents from FE colleges and 52% from sixth-form colleges indicated that they provided in service training for tutorial staff. However while 15% in FE colleges provided access to accredited external training, no sixth-form colleges did. Some commented that take-up of external training was limited. At 12% of the institutions there was no staff development in guidance for tutors. Two colleges visited were concerned at the lack of external training for staff to support students' entry to work rather than to HE.

The careers services suggested tutor training as a development need in the FE sector. Both careers and college staff identified ensuring consistency of tutorial input as a significant problem in delivering effective careers education and guidance on programme. Fifteen per cent of respondents to the college survey also reported it as one of their three greatest weaknesses and a further eight per cent identified the lack of priority accorded to careers education and guidance by tutors. Tutors may have qualifications such as (C&G 730), but only the new Further and Adult Education Teaching Certificate includes tutoring modules. Some guidance specialists were specifically looking for other accredited packages for their tutors. Investors in People (IiP) offered a framework for an annual individual training needs analysis with subsequent referral for training. Tutors at one college were actively identifying their own training needs and suggesting topics for updating. There was interest in the new NVQs developed by the Advice, Guidance, Counselling and Psychotherapy Lead Body in Service Support (level 2), Advice, and Guidance (both at levels 3 and 4) or in relevant units for setting staff standards or curriculum for development.

Continuing professional development for specialists in careers education and guidance employed by colleges is most likely to be provided through attendance at external conferences; accredited external training and attendance at external events organised by professional bodies. At one college visited, the careers service had offered to fund one member of the college staff to train in guidance. The

prevalence of professionally qualified guidance staff in the case-study colleges is a useful indicator for other colleges.

The college survey indicated that careers services were delivering staff development for tutors throughout the sector, but were slightly more likely to be doing so in sixth-form colleges. Thirteen per cent of colleges reported that the careers service provider was delivering training to college specialists.

Results from the surveys indicate that:

- nearly all colleges draw upon internal funds for staff development programmes
- three quarters of careers services were drawing upon their own resources or 'special' funding to finance the training they delivered to colleges although only 38% of colleges reported using careers service funds
- eight contracted services were charging colleges for elements of staff development
- 72% of careers services but only 17% of colleges are accessing funded by regional government offices (many college staff are unaware of this source of funding)

Staff development for careers service staff working in FE

Adequate understanding of how an FE college operates is important for working effectively in a large institution but only just over half the careers services provide an induction programme for their staff working in FE. Four careers services reported that they did not have any specific staff development. The problems of communication and accessing staff and students within colleges reinforce the need for special induction. Careers services and colleges need to work collaboratively to identify how they can both contribute to this process. Seventy-one per cent of careers services reported that their staff participated in local networks for staff working in the post-16 sector, and 63% that careers advisers took

part in relevant development activities organised by the college for their own staff.

Briefing senior management and governors in colleges

There is no evidence from this research of training in guidance issues for senior management or governors, although it is one of the principles of good practice promoted by *Better Choices* (DfEE). There are, however, both informal and formal channels for briefing senior management teams and governors, such as regular reporting through line management, via the academic board, deans' meetings, etc. In one instance, the chair of governors chaired the student service sub-committee, to which the college careers adviser reported. In the smaller sixth-form colleges the principal is often directly involved in elements of guidance such as admissions interviews.

Governors are briefed on careers education and guidance in the following ways:

- systematic reporting on all areas of the institution's work, including careers education and guidance
- by encouraging them to attend open evenings
- through involvement in a 'careers panel'
- reports, college bulletin, etc.

Governors may also receive and discuss destination data. A named governor, designated to take an overview of guidance, and possibly representing the college on education-business partnerships or local forums, is an effective means of ensuring a high profile.

Recommendations:

- Internal networks of specialist and non-specialist staff with an interest in guidance should be developed to support staff and promote understanding of guidance through the college.
- Staff development needs should be identified, and provision tailored to meet the needs of support staff, tutors, specialists and senior managers.
- A designated senior manager or governor can ensure strategic attention to guidance needs.
- Accredited and joint training with careers services should be developed.
- Careers services need to improve staff awareness of the rapidly changing FE context.

Chapter 6

Delivering guidance on-programme

Models of on-programme and exit guidance

College survey results suggest that tutorial groups are the preferred means of delivering careers education and guidance across programme areas and age groups— 72% of A-level 16-19 students and 35% of adults on non-vocational courses. However, comments from students during the college visits indicated that they do not necessarily connect tutors with careers education; they tend to associate this more with the careers specialists.

This may be because tutors carry out a range of guidance-related activities:

- personal tutorials, including action planning and review addressing the students' individual development in college
- group tutorials, covering a range of activities, including explicit or implicit delivery of careers education and one-to-one help within the group
- planning and review as part of, for example, a GNVQ programme

- helping students to complete their record of achievement

Approximately one third of colleges had a cross-college programme for 16 -19 students on GCSE, A-level and GNVQ programmes. This dropped to 22% for young people on other vocational programmes. Only 17% had a programme for adults on vocational courses, and 13% for adults on non-vocational courses. Not surprisingly, careers education was most likely to be embedded in the curriculum for 16 -19 GNVQ students and those on other vocational programmes.

There is a need to ensure that mechanisms exist to link guidance across the stages, through pre-entry to exit, so that coherent and comprehensive provision exists.

In a number of the colleges visited, the DOTS model (see Figure 4 on page 72) and *Better Choices* had informed the careers education and guidance provision. Most of these colleges are addressing adult needs, even if the provision is not customised as such: in one case their needs were being discussed with tutors and in others, tutors adapted a basic framework to different student groups.

Evidence suggests that staff delivering careers education and guidance are most likely to draw on information from the careers library within the college, and that provided by the careers service and careers advisers' expertise and knowledge. Very few access local labour market data as a main source of information, even though it may be available in the college and used for strategic planning purposes. This also underlines the importance of ensuring that information in both college and careers service libraries is current and comprehensive. Colleges may need to review their sources of information on the labour market (i.e. through work experience, employer links, the TEC, etc.), to ensure that information collection, storage and updating are co-ordinated and made available to staff and students.

Preparing for further learning and work

Factors which appear to influence the different resource allocations for for entry into work compared with progression to HE include:

- historical delivery patterns
- previous destination data (reviewed annually in at least one case)
- the philosophy of the institution
- the student's desired outcomes (e.g. as recorded in the ROA) and abilities/skills
- the economic climate
- realistic options for the cohort

Of these, the greatest influence appears to be the previous year's destination data. One college commented that the division was 'faculty and student led'. The research suggests that:

- apart from one institution which estimated a 50/50 split, others able to estimate the balance of provision reported that at least 60% of their programme was focused on entry to HE: none devoted more time to preparation for work than to entry to HE
- in institutions where careers education to support entry to HE is timetabled for certain programmes, such as A-level/Advanced GNVQ students, it is likely all will participate, whether or not their intended first destination is HE. Those with other career plans are supported on an individual basis
- some institutions stressed the importance of checking individual career plans before deciding whether to assist the student on a group or individual basis. One institution considered that delivering 70% of careers education and

guidance on an individual basis would address inappropriate emphasis on progression to HE

Students progressing to other courses within the institution are most likely to receive guidance from discussions with their personal or course tutor. Where students progress to programmes outside their faculty, colleges need to ensure that they can access the full range of information on possible options.

The findings also indicate the extent to which colleges rely on careers services to facilitate entry into vocational training, such as modern apprenticeships, and to provide information on the range of such options.

Supporting direct entry to employment

The college survey indicates that students who want to enter the labour market are supported through:

- individual careers guidance interviews
- the broad contribution of careers service staff
- workshops or seminars on entry into employment, addressing topics such as job search, preparing applications, interview skills and c.v. preparation

Colleges visited supported entry into employment through:

- job clubs (it became clear during the visits that colleges interpret this term in different ways, and sixth-form colleges interpret it differently from FE colleges)
- cross-college job search and c.v. preparation workshops and seminars
- similar advice provided on a drop-in basis
- job search packs and other support materials for students
- career track

- mock interviews, often using video facilities

Some colleges with many unemployed adults are also investigating the new Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) in order to develop guidance provision meeting JSA requirements, through:

- enabling JSA students to develop portfolios of job search skills
- supporting JSA students through the college's 'work-link' initiative, which currently advises students on benefits
- increasing flexibility of provision
- attending regular meetings with Employment Services and the welfare officer to review developments and plan necessary staff development

One guidance team member had written a book on JSA with case studies, training and adjudication information.

Some college staff are planning appropriate provision for those wishing to enter employment. One FE college reported that fewer Advanced GNVQ students were going on to HE and that the guidance staff were seeking to run job search seminars for them. A sixth-form college reported a similar trend amongst its A-level students, and had formed an informal support group for those seeking employment, facilitated by the college's careers adviser. These students had felt somewhat pressured to apply to HE, and were obliged to attend a session where the rest of their cohort completed UCAS forms.

Several of the colleges visited expressed particular concern about those students on one-year courses, such as GCSE, Foundation courses and Intermediate GNVQs, who initially expect to enter more advanced courses, but may not be able to do so, and must be actively encouraged to be realistic about their options. These students need broader options at an early enough stage to allow for planning. Experience suggests that some of them are not aware early enough that they will not be able to progress as expected, which results in 'crisis careers counselling' in the summer term. One college had instigated tighter monitoring of careers

education for GCSE and GNVQ foundation and intermediate students as a result of its quality review. Careers-related materials and training are needed for staff supporting these students.

Colleges visited are using the following sources to obtain labour market information:

- the careers service (although one college commented the careers service were 'not so good at LMI as they used to be')
- directly from employers, using staff/employer contacts
- trawling newspapers and vacancy boards
- the local TEC; one commented that LMI information from the TEC was not regular or in a useful format
- the Economic Development Unit
- initiatives providing support to JSA students

Some institutions reported that it was difficult to obtain up-to-date LMI and ensure that it was used effectively by tutors. One college reported that it circulated LMI to faculties for use in GNVQs and to inform tutors. Another, which focused its careers education on preparing for HE reported that LMI was held in the careers library, but not used proactively by tutors or students. There appears to be a need for tutor training in interpreting and using relevant LMI.

In an era of lifelong learning — in which those on HE programmes are likely to have to support their study by working part time and those entering work are likely to engage in episodic learning — there is a need for everyone to have adequate foundation training in the skills required to access both work and learning opportunities.

Post-exit provision

Most of the colleges responding to the survey (86%) offer some form of post-exit guidance. However, it is not clear from the research how adequate this is. It is likely to be delivered through:

- accessible guidance provision throughout the year (although in FE colleges this may focus more on pre-entry guidance)
- a post-examination results advisory service

Ten per cent of sixth-form colleges and six per cent of FE colleges indicated that they had tutors/ lecturers available. If post-exit guidance is not adequately publicised to departing students, take up may be low, particularly where the provision is informal.

Sixth-form colleges benefit from the closer relationships in smaller institutions and sometimes make extensive use of ex-students, e.g. in facilitating groups at the HE conference, undertaking work experience at the college, etc.

Take up of guidance

Colleges surveyed indicated that the main groups that are less likely to take up guidance opportunities are:

- students on part-time courses, including evenings
- adult/mature students
- students on vocational courses

A few also mentioned students on one-year courses, GCSE students and HE students. A few colleges reported higher and increasing take-up by GNVQ students. This may reflect increased use of careers facilities for researching assignments.The groups most likely to use the provision were A-level students, Access students, students progressing to HE and the 16-19 age range: many of whom traditionally expect to progress to HE rather than work and these results may suggest the following questions:

- are these groups most likely to take up the guidance offered, because they participate in a careers education or tutorial programme?

- is the guidance offered more appropriate to the needs of those progressing to HE?

A few also indicated that there was a higher take up amongst mature students: this apparent discrepancy may be because of the higher motivation of some mature students but reduced access for some adults attending evening programmes. Other factors which appear to have some effect on the level of take-up include the attitudes of tutors (i.e. affecting levels of referral) and whether or not a student is based at the main site.

Clearly the collection of accurate data on use of facilities and provision depends on monitoring take-up and it is possible that some of this data is based on perception rather than statistical data.

Increasing take up by students on higher education courses

Discussions with HE students in the final year of their programme at one FE college revealed that:

- *they had no recollection of ever having been made aware of the careers facilities although these were introduced to them at induction*
- *only two out of the group of 12 had sought assistance from the college: of these one was very satisfied with the assistance he had received to help prepare his c.v. The other had visited the linked careers adviser, whom he felt had known little about opportunities for graduates*

This underlines the importance of ensuring that:

- students are made aware of the support available to them when they are likely to need it
- take up of guidance provision by different groups and programme areas is regularly monitored, particularly where it requires the students to be proactive
- guidance specialist staff working outside HE, albeit within an FE college or careers service provider are adequately trained

and supported to meet the needs of students on franchised HE programmes

Another college tailored its provision to the needs of HE students:

Monitoring procedures for guidance in one college had led to the following improvements in provision for students on HE programmes:

- *a job search pack*
- *a new dedicated resource section in the careers library*
- *information on graduate opportunities*

Students on HE programmes can suggest what they would like covered, and the guidance team organises this and delivers to them.

Links between action planning in the curriculum and in careers guidance

Some colleges are attempting to set up coherent systems, which link action planning by students on learning programmes to the careers guidance process. Learning agreements at entry do not necessarily build on the individual action plan/National Record of Achievement (IAP/NRA) drawn up in schools in any formal way. Students are more likely to be encouraged to draft new action plans or profiles at entry. In some cases they refer to other relevant documentation such as previous career plans or results from psychometric tests. One college commented that the profile of ROAs had declined following the completion of the TVEI initiative.

Action plans/ learning agreements completed on entry by students after discussion with admissions staff may be made available to careers staff to check and select any students who may require an interview. Tutors sometimes identify students who need referring from this process but there is little evidence that learning agreements are built on systematically, although some staff encouraged their students to take

their initial profiles and action plans to careers interviews once on programme.

In some colleges one copy of a careers action plan produced on programme is sent to the tutor, another retained by the careers officer and a third by the student. Whilst this reduces the danger of careers action planning diverging from the IAP/ROA process, there is potential tension between coherence and confidentiality, unless the student is firmly in control of the process and empowered to request that details are not passed. Even where careers action plans are copied to college staff, it does not necessarily follow that IAPs developed in the departments are copied to careers staff. The lack of impact of ROAs on careers services suggests that students are duplicating rather than building on previous action planning. As well as action planning in personal tutorials, students on GNVQ courses are action planning as a key skill of managing their own learning. They obviously benefit from coherent linked processes (see Figure 3 on page 33).

One institution developed a computerised system for IAP/ROAs. The students held a floppy disk with their action plan and record and were responsible for updating it. They could print out and work from a hard copy either in course time or with the careers adviser, and some had used information from their careers action plan to update their disk. In another case, the college and careers service were moving towards common documentation: there was already space for students to record their careers interview in their college record of progress and the same action plans were used both by college specialists and careers service staff delivering individual interviews. The action plan format was being reviewed jointly by college staff and the new careers service provider.

Factors affecting the development of guidance for students in transition

Colleges visited identified the following factors as having most impact on the development provision:

- the inability to ensure consistency of delivery
- constant change
- external constraints (e.g. changes in the labour market)
- the adequacy of resources and time to deliver
- the quality of tutor education and links with tutors (which need improving)
- communications
- senior management support and understanding

Lack of time in the curriculum was identified as a significant problem by several participants; hence the welcome for opportunities offered by some programmes areas to integrate careers education into the curriculum. Staff also identified the level of motivation of the individual student as important (particularly where there is no careers education programme delivered consistently across the institution) and the need to be able reach students successfully.

These concerns were reflected to a large extent in the college survey, in which the 70% of respondents who commented, identified the following as the main weaknesses in their provision:

- the lack of staff/ staff time (19%)
- the lack of consistency in the tutorial input (15%)
- poor/uneven take up by students (15%)
- lack of/limited provision for particular groups (15%)
- the lack of consistency/uniformity in careers education and guidance provision (11%)

Recommendations:

- Colleges should identify barriers in their institution to consistent provision of careers guidance and devise plans for overcoming them.
- Ensure that the needs of different student groups are assessed and targeted and that staff have access to information and support to deliver appropriate guidance.
- Different forms of action planning and review managed by different staff should be co-ordinated to avoid repetition and make the experience consistent for the learners.
- Ensure that students making transition choices at any point in their pathway through college have access to guidance: early leavers and potential drop-outs in particular need timely, appropriate and impartial advice and guidance.

Chapter 7

Careers education and the curriculum

Working with tutors

Key constraints on developing careers education are:

- the difficulty of ensuring consistency of delivery
- the lack of resources
- the lack of time in training programmes for delivering adequate careers education

In the college survey, 11% of colleges reported either increased tutor involvement in the delivery of guidance or that the tutorial programme was being formalised.

Some colleges have been auditing their tutorial provision and working with tutors to enhance it, particularly by preparing materials for tutor groups and delivering staff development.

Developing the tutorial programme

A cross-college group in one FE college has developed a framework to provide tutors with a guide to topics for covering during tutorials. This is supported by

a comprehensive set of tutorial packs (e.g. on c.v.s and job search), including photocopiable papers, kept in the library for use in tutorials. A role description of the personal tutor has been drawn up to provide a guide for tutors, and the tutorial review group, chaired by the quality manager, has established a system for monitoring the quality of the tutorial input, including a series of in-depth interviews with tutorial staff.

Modularising the tutorial programme

A Welsh college has been seeking to modularise its careers education programme mirroring curriculum developments in the Principality. It worked with FEDA on developing effective tutorial provision, and is establishing a unitised tutorial programme, embedded in the curriculum and linked to specific assessment criteria. This has arisen from the results from an audit of tutorial work on careers education and from a survey of students' views, which will be used as a baseline from which to evaluate the new programme. It will include units on Access to Higher Education, Work Experience and Action Planning, and all full-time students will have to take two out of three units. Students will have workbooks, including a checklist to enable them to follow their progress through the units.

The students will be encouraged to use the college guidance specialists and cross-college guidance provision (e.g. job search workshops) to help them complete the units. Support materials such as workbooks have been prepared. The expertise of guidance specialists has been under-used by students in the past, so it is hoped that the new programme will encourage the tutors to view their role more broadly than just a personal and social education/welfare responsibility and to encourage them to refer on more frequently when appropriate.

If the college secures funding for the units, that will enable the specialists to do more support work, and then, it is hoped, to extend it to those on part-time provision.

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Embedding careers education within the curriculum

The publication of *Better Choices* has encouraged consideration of how careers education could be more embedded within the curriculum. In one college, such a debate was also being prompted by training provided to college staff by the careers officer. There is a great deal of interest amongst specialists working in colleges in using GNVQs to deliver aspects of careers education. Some, such as the Business BTEC Advanced and Intermediate GNVQ, include units with assignments requiring a careers input for successful completion (e.g. Self-Development for Career Planning, Self Development for Work). This is stimulating greater involvement of careers specialists in the curriculum.

Linking to GNVQs

At one FE college the careers officer was approached for assistance in the Autumn term by a tutor delivering the Intermediate GNVQ in Business and Finance. They were about to cover unit 2, one element of which was 'Prepare for employment or self employment'. This required students to:

- *interview people in three different situations to identify different types of employment or self-employment*
- *identify the skills required for these types of employment/and self-employment and the extent to which they had developed these themselves*
- *identify the steps they needed to take to prepare themselves for types of employment in which they were interested.*

Students were required to access and interpret relevant information. The careers officer's expertise was used to help plan the assignment including identifying the most appropriate sources of information and making this available to the class, and assisting the students in their research and evaluation of their skills, including individual interviews and the production of careers action plans. Information on different types of employment was obtained through interviewing family and friends, and the inclusion of an

international dimension increased students' awareness of the importance of mobility in career planning. Students used the Kudos computer programme to match their skills and abilities to the job specifications. Some built on experience of part-time work. The assignment also provided a focus for discussion with the tutor and updating the students' records of achievement.

Previously, tutors delivering Leisure and Tourism and Health and Social Care courses had used the careers officer as a source of information but not involved them in the planning of assignments or face-to-face work with the students. As well as raising the profile of the careers officer with students and familiarising them with the resources available, the work on the GNVQ in Business enabled the students to view the careers officer as a 'helper' in a new context. The students had seen the careers facilities at their induction only a few weeks earlier, but they remembered very little whereas the 'hands-on experience' encouraged subsequent use of the facilities.

The tutor wants to do the same assignment in the same way next year. A report on the contribution of the careers service to completing the assignment may also be included in the tutorial handbook, with an invitation for other interested tutors to make contact.

It is particularly important for those not continuing on to the GNVQ Advanced course to be encouraged to access careers information and guidance at an early stage during the one year Intermediate course, and broaden the options they are considering.

The ASDAN awards, which focus on the development of key skills, attract FEFC funding, and are becoming increasingly popular in the FE sector. They also provide a means of integrating careers education within the curriculum.

Using the ASDAN award

The ASDAN Core Skills Award had been included in a Signwriting course in one of the FE colleges visited. Amongst other skills, the award requires students to provide evidence of IT, self-assessment and careers awareness. Evidence is

drawn from projects on careers and self-employment, including visits from outside speakers. IT training is used to produce c.v.s. The careers adviser helped them with applications and mock interviews for 'real jobs', gave them feedback and drew up a careers action plan with each student.

Feedback from both the younger and more mature students was very positive, indicating that this approach was much more realistic and better than careers education at school. The tutor maintained that the great strength of this approach was its integration within the curriculum.

Accreditation of careers education

There is clear evidence of interest in accrediting careers education programmes, although most colleges visited had not yet accredited their programmes. Open college accreditation has been sought for modules covering career planning and development, and work experience.

One college was investigating accreditation offered through the key skills framework and elsewhere, as already indicated, GNVQs are providing an opportunity for accreditation. There was a good deal of interest in a GNVQ unit specifically on careers education which is being developed by NCVQ, and trialled by FEDA and NCVQ.

Writing careers education programmes for accreditation

A careers adviser in one college visited was writing a generic careers education programme to include five units:

- *induction*
- *progression opportunities*
- *progression experience*
- *progression applicationsa*
- *transition*

The outcomes are competence-based and at four levels: Open College entry, and levels 1, 2, and 3 with the intention to apply for open college accreditation.

There are already accredited units on induction and job search. Once the units are accredited, they can be customised for programme areas, and additionality can be claimed. The word 'progression' was used, in preference to 'careers', to avoid negative preconceptions some students had about the relevance of 'careers education'.

Issues arising from the accreditation of careers education:

- students may not be very interested in accreditation: they often wish to do individual pieces of careers research when it suits them, and when they have found and interpreted the information required, they may not wish to continue a module through to completion: this affects achievement-related funding
- project-based careers education requires access to the necessary range of resources for all students completing the assignment (often at the same time)
- accreditation is seen as a mechanism for enabling careers education to be claimed as additionality, which both reduces the time required from core programmes and ensures time is devoted to careers education activities. The current funding methodology can be seen as an impediment to integrating careers education on programmes, if the tutors feel they require all the allocated time to ensure that the students achieve their primary learning goal

The benefits of accreditation include:

- tutorials for careers education are likely to be taken more seriously by students
- providing an effective vehicle for the use of specialists, (it may increase appropriate referrals)

- providing a framework for clarifying the thinking behind careers education and guidance provision
- students are more aware of the learning outcomes of guidance
- linking tutorials to the curriculum

Work experience and employer links

Work experience is generally rooted in the curriculum and tutor-led, and may be part of the assessment process, rather than the guidance process. Only 31% of colleges indicated that work experience was a major source of information for staff delivering careers education and guidance. There may be little liaison with the guidance specialists working in the college, or the linked careers service provider. In some cases there are one or more co-ordinators or industrial placement officers, who support the activity, including developing materials, making contact with potential placements, compiling lists for tutors and evaluating the placements. Colleges report increasing use of workshadowing. Vocational courses with close employer links may require less support. One co-ordinator commented that she was trying to encourage A-level tutors to be more proactive in facilitating work experience for their tutees. One college draws on the contacts of the careers service's work experience officer to help place students.

One institution has tried to move away from the use of the term 'work experience' to the use of 'progression' which reflects the range of potential student destinations. Within this concept:

- *students applying for HE have shadowed first-year students on the local HE course they wished to enter*
- *students with learning difficulties and disabilities have been placed in sheltered employment*

Where members of the college guidance team were participating in aspects of organising work experience, they were involved in the following:

- *arranging job shadowing and holiday jobs for students who have left the college and not progressed directly into employment*
- *briefing/de-briefing students*

Guidance staff in colleges have been exploiting links with employers as the following two case studies demonstrate but it is often easier for those in institutions with major vocational programmes to draw on employer expertise. Others may rely more on the input of the careers service provider for LMI and employer contacts.

Maximising employer links

One specialist vocational college, most of whose academic staff had previously worked within the relevant occupational area, had developed working practices which exploited the closeness of these contacts. The central careers department was linked through to the tutorial teams via a designated member of the academic staff who had responsibility for liaising between the tutors and the college careers adviser. The following were in place:

- *centralisation of vacancy details held by the careers department*
- *active eliciting by the careers adviser of vacancies when necessary (including those for part-time and summer work)*
- *the collection of vacancy details from employers during careers events*
- *a system of vacancy cards, generated by the college and held by employers, which they posted back with vacancy details*
- *a vacancy board, on which details from all sources (including the Careers Service) were displayed*

- *details of the previous employment of staff held (with their permission), by the careers department, which enabled referral of students interested in an occupational area in which staff had experience*

- *employer recruitment on the premises: students are notified in advance by the careers adviser and through a notice at reception*

In this particular case the industries served were relatively buoyant and there was plenty of part-time and temporary work for students. Employers want NVQ 1 or 2 as a minimum to offer a 'permanent' job and so there is an incentive for students to complete their course. Students would typically work at weekends, but were not released for temporary contracts during the programme, unless as part of the curriculum and with the consent of the tutor.

This goes much farther than the more common practice of inviting employers to give talks on different career paths. The following case study demonstrates a variation on the effective but expensive one-to-one mentoring schemes which help under-achieving young people by providing role models.

Group mentoring

An FE college has developed a 'group mentoring programme' with local employers. It links the employers to support groups of students on specific courses and was partly prompted by a conference with the careers service, which was trying to encourage closer links between colleges and industry. It was the responsibility of the college guidance co-ordinator and was funded primarily from internal resources, with a little financial help from the TEC through its Education/Business Partnership.

Guidelines were produced for employers covering the time and type of support envisaged (six sessions a year were suggested). At the same time the commitment of tutors in the two pilot areas Business Studies and Engineering was sought. The scheme was targeted at groups that didn't intend to enter HE. An initial briefing meeting linked tutors and prospective employers (mainly

personnel staff). Individual arrangements between the employer and tutor typically involved employer input on an overview of the organisation; the types of work offered; changing work roles and patterns. Some employers also arranged visits to the company, for which tutors prepared checklists with their students, and afterwards held informal debriefings. Many employers also supported students in developing job search skills, including feeding back on job applications and mock interviews.

There was no direct link with the work experience scheme, although the interest stimulated resulted in one of the employers offering more work experience places. The scheme was not devised as a recruitment mechanism for employers, and the advantages of employer involvement were enjoyed by the cohort as a whole. Nonetheless, all involved derived some benefits from the scheme:

For the employers:

- *an opportunity for personal development in mentoring skills for younger staff in the company (some of whom were ex-students from the college)*
- *the potential to recruit better informed and more committed young people*

For the college:

- *enhanced image amongst businesses*
- *better informed staff*
- *more motivated students*
- *enhanced careers education and guidance*

For the students:

- *greater employability*

- *greater realism about the world of work and a broader understanding of the range of employment available*
- *improved understanding of the relevance of their course to the workplace, and where it could take them*
- *role models provided by women engineers*
- *greater understanding of mobility/different business cultures/the importance of acquiring a foreign language*
- *an introduction to IT systems in use in the workplace*

Vacancy information and services

Some colleges have developed strong links with local employment services:

- one area job centre provides a job board and sends in details of part-time and evening work to its local FE college
- at one vocational college, staff from a specialised job centre, based in the city, visit for half a day every week, bringing its fresh vacancies, updating those from the previous week and submitting interested students for placement

Vacancy details are received by colleges from the careers service provider, the employment service, employers and sometimes internal staff. One college commented that many employers phoned in with details of part-time jobs. One sixth-form college was receiving vacancies directly from ex-students and was following up leads and trends from newspapers.

Vacancies are typically displayed on notice-boards: students are encouraged to check them and apply, with assistance as necessary. Sometimes there is also a central filing system for vacancy details. One sixth-form college requires students to have a c.v. and to have received

advice on their accompanying letter before applying for vacancies. Vacancies are normally updated by the careers or employment service or a designated member of the college's guidance team. Newspapers with vacancy details are also often available for students to scan. One FE college, with many students on HE programmes, had established links to universities for vacancy details.

Some institutions are more pro-active than others in bringing students' attention to vacancies: two sixth form colleges and two FE colleges include vacancy information (e.g. on post-GCSE traineeships) in the careers section of their weekly news or careers bulletin. These bulletins are circulated to staff (and sometimes students) and, in the case of the FE colleges, to the other sites. The bulletins may also include articles on different types of careers and a reminder about application deadlines. Two institutions commented that they were aware that their vacancy service needed developing and one was clearly concerned that the careers service was not co-operating. At one college visited, the vacancy service was entirely operated by the careers service.

Recommendations:

- Careers education does not necessarily take place in discrete packages. Colleges should map where elements occur in student experience and ensure all students have access to a range of activities preparing them both for further learning and work.
- Colleges should identify desired learning outcomes and consider providing accredited courses.
- Careers service expertise, especially relating to the labour market, should be used more widely in designing and delivering careers education programmes.

Chapter 8

Using information in careers education and guidance

Figure 4: Potential elements of careers education

Activities

How necessary is it that these activities, which may be part of a student's experience in college, make a discrete package or one that is coherent to the student?

- initial guidance and induction
- action planning, review, recording achievement
- work experience, work shadowing, visits
- self or mediated access to careers library
- mentoring and compacts with employers
- computer-assessed guidance and database access
- talks from outside speakers and careers fairs
- vocational elements in mainstream curriculum
- group tutorial programmes
- accredited discrete careers education modules

Activities continued

- Practical and research projects and assignments
- Skill development activities
- Practising job applications, c.v.s and interviews
- Individual interviews with tutor or specialists

Acquisition of skills

The DOTS model, devised by Tony Watts and Bill Law of NICEC, and used as a framework in many colleges, can be broken down into detailed learning outcomes:

- decision-making
- opportunity awareness
- transition skills
- self-assessment

A curriculum framework?

Careers education needs to be tailored to the needs of different programmes, levels and individual students, but is likely to contain common elements, such as:

- investigating requirements and opportunities of different career routes
- options for further study and training
- changing work patterns and lifelong learning
- non-traditional options and equal opportunity issues
- skills demanded by employers and/or self-employment
- appraising own achievements, interests and personal preferences
- information sources and handling and evaluating evidence
- making and assessing implications of choices
- shorter and longer term action planning
- developing skills for presenting achievements in applications

Careers information and the use of information technology

It is clear that the Careers Library Initiative has helped colleges to enhance their careers information provision. Facilities at the colleges visited generally included one or more libraries (often using the Careers Library Classification Index (CLCI) with a range of prospectuses, video facilities and interview rooms. In some cases careers libraries had been incorporated into learning centres or into the college's main library. One institution has developed specialist libraries covering welfare, serviced by a welfare officer, HE and post-16 opportunities; an employer library is currently under development.

Most library facilities are designed primarily for autonomous use with assistance from a duty tutor, careers adviser, information staff and support staff when necessary. Security is an issue for most colleges but if unsupervised access is not permitted, access to the library in some cases is inadequate. Colleges with larger guidance teams are more able to provide open access with staff on hand all the time.

In most cases collections in careers libraries are reviewed and updated annually; one college was trying to update monthly, but this was unusual. One sixth-form college was introducing more materials to support entry into work. Many colleges draw on the expertise of the careers service to help decide on materials and software selection. A range of staff are involved in the updating, including guidance managers and their team, information specialists and their assistants. College staff may be assisted by students on work experience (i.e. one was tasked with cataloguing all the materials). Additions are made when gaps are identified.

Examples of the types of careers education materials developed internally include:

- careers packs
- job packs/job search packs

- tutorial programme packs
- a tracker pack — a computerised tool to record progress and achievement
- a decision-making module

Handout materials are often prepared to support workshops. Some institutions have published their materials and are marketing them. One institution recognised the need for open learning packs for part-time and distance learners, who may have less access to support on site.

Institutions were at different stages of development in relation to computerisation. In some cases IT is used extensively: one college reported heavy use of computer packages between May and October; IT is also used substantially for clearing. Some institutions had, or were moving towards, drop-in or open learning workshops, where students could book a terminal for multiple use — including accessing careers packages, updating ROAs etc. Where necessary, IT skills are being built into programmes to enable students to use the equipment.

Computer packages and databases available at the colleges visited include:

- Kudos: used by adults
- ECCTIS : may be used on a network
- Microdoors: used by adults, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and GNVQ students for project work
- Adult Directions: staff indicate that it is useful at generating options and provoking thought
- Discourse
- Which University
- TAP
- NVQ database
- some networked c.v. packages

Some students were using computer packages to confirm choice. Some colleges were investigating links to the Internet and were interested in exploring its role/use in guidance. One college was concerned that there may be fewer women than men using their careers software.

Monitoring and publicising facilities

Most of the colleges visited were not monitoring use of the careers library formally — although they may be monitoring other aspects of their provision (e.g. occupation of space is monitored for FEFC; monitoring demand for guidance interviews, etc.). One member of staff commented on the difficulty of monitoring the use of facilities across college. One college was expecting to monitor take-up of computer packages via the terminals, which would record levels of use.

Monitoring use as an aid to planning work

As a result of monitoring trends in usage of the careers library facilities at one institution, the college careers adviser made specific attempts to encourage links with part-time evening classes to encourage take-up from students on these programmes. Data was being collected on:

- *the reasons for visiting the centre*
- *how long a student spent in the centre*
- *the programme s/he was on*
- *resources used*

The adviser noted that there has been less use from groups who are given a lot of assistance on placements. Analysis of the data has been useful to the adviser in planning her own work.

One guidance team was trying to increase use of the careers library by students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Students are made aware of information facilities through:

- the student handbook
- the tutorial handbook
- at induction
- an orientation session
- through the college bulletin / newsletters / student news
- posters / on boards around the college
- duty tutors
- leaflets
- the college action plan
- the careers education programme which includes written assignments about using information
- careers talks which include an introduction to the facilities available

One sixth form required entrants to complete a careers quiz at induction (including questions about the library area) and this had proved successful at raising awareness of what was available. It could also be used to measure distance travelled in awareness. Clear labelling, library guides and self-help materials also encourage use.

The impact of IT

During the research, staff also shared their perceptions of the students' views on the use of information technology and computers for careers work. Anecdotal observations indicate that:

- students appear to be using the paper-based careers library less and, given the option, will tend to head for a computer package
- students appreciate the immediacy of a computer response rather then having to search through written text

- students value the opportunity to request a computer print-out, rather than having to take notes
- students appear to believe that insights gleaned from a computer have greater authority than from paper-based materials

Increased use of IT packages and a potential shift in how and where students search for careers information suggest all colleges should monitor the use of their careers facilities including the careers library. Some developments may be being hindered by the production of packages for stand-alone machines, when college systems are networked.

Availability at college sites

Evidence from the visits indicates that while the same level of careers information provision is available on all sites in some colleges, this is not always the case. Colleges adopt different approaches to this issue:

- resource bases on smaller sites may offer similar but less comprehensive provision (i.e. certain computer packages may only be available at the main site, particularly where data need interpretation by qualified staff)
- learning resource centres and open learning workshops are being used increasingly to site computer-assisted guidance packages
- in some cases library resources are geared to the programmes delivered on a particular site (e.g. adult, students with disabilities and learning difficulties, etc.)
- selected materials and computer packages may be duplicated in the library and careers centre for easy access
- facilities available at the main site are publicised at other sites
- colleges may provide buses linking different campuses

The collection and use of destination data

Early leavers

There is a variety of approaches to following up students who drop out early. Results from the colleges' survey indicate that institutions are likely to:

- offer students a careers guidance interview
- follow up and require an appointment to be made with the tutor, director of study or course leader
- refer students to the college's specialist guidance staff to be followed up, interviewed and in some case signed off by them

Monitoring absences is most likely to be done by individual tutors, referring on to guidance staff where necessary. An early leaver form may be completed by tutors on all those dropping out and copied to the student services department, to enable guidance staff to follow up students when necessary: this may also trigger a follow-up letter.

One institution reported that staff try to identify poor attenders and those at risk of drop out early on, in order to offer help and support. Some individual departments have procedures: others are less systematic. Some staff are aware that this area of work needs further development: in one institution visited, staff commented that 'a "leavers clearance interview" is offered, but this is not working well'.

> *At one sixth-form college visited, any information of concern is immediately fed back to the principal and heads of faculty, e.g. when all the girls on a Computer Studies course wanted to change course.*
>
> *A large FE college has devised a central follow-up system for cross-college departments which do not already have adequate arrangements. It includes a checklist of actions and referral for support to personal tutors, counsellors or members of the guidance team, as appropriate. A similar centralised system is used by a sixth form college, which operates a 'mid-course leavers' procedure,*

whereby students are automatically seen by subject tutors, a senior tutor and the college's careers adviser, with referral to the careers service adviser as appropriate. A checklist ensures that they have seen all relevant staff.

Data collection

Colleges visited were interested in developing more efficient systems for data collection. Some have difficulty collecting comprehensive data for those not progressing to HE (for which the data is provided by UCAS). There is also concern that without a centralised system, effort is duplicated and statistics overlap.

Colleges' methods of collecting data included:

- administrative staff following up by telephone (a problem if students do not have a phone)
- the distribution of cards when students are notified of results, which students are requested to complete and return by a certain date
- informally through word of mouth (which tutors may be asked to check before recording)
- centrally by the registry
- by tutors completing destinations forms
- through careers staff

In some cases the data is computerised, which means it can be manipulated more easily for specific uses (but the system may not cover part-time students). The use of a computerised system for recording destination on student files, accessible to staff, may also increase the likelihood of more informal information being recorded. However, this raises issues around confidentiality.

Linking data collection and follow up by careers staff

One vocational college with a large HE programme, has developed a data collection system , which is about 90% effective. This is based on the following elements:

- *an initial trawl of known / intended destinations on the last day of attendance at college by completion of a form: if students have not yet been placed, this also offers them the opportunity to state the type of employment being sought, which can be checked by the careers adviser*
- *a follow-up letter sent linking a request for information on destination data to:*
  - *the address to which their certificate should be sent*
  - *whether they need details of graduate opportunities sent, which provides data for compiling destination statistics*
- *the careers adviser trawls vacancy information and sends out details as appropriate*

In this instance the SLA specifies that the college will continue to collect data and advise the careers service provider of the destinations of its students.

There is some confusion but careers services have the main responsibility for school-leaver destination data and colleges for college-leaver destination data.

- careers services are more likely to collect comprehensive data for year 11 than year 13
- data is generally shared between the institutions and the careers service provider (i.e. by providing the careers service with the names of those enrolling; by sending through destination data for year 11, etc)

However, in one case the careers service was following up all their clients at year 11, but did not produce destination data for FE. In this instance the TEC was also interested in student tracking — and the college staff commented that it should be a partnership approach. In one area visited, destination data for post year 11 collected by the careers service provider is sent to schools and the TEC as well as to colleges.

The use of destination data

Data from the college survey and visits indicate that colleges are using destination data to :

- market the institution's provision, e.g. included in publicity materials and in talks to potential applicants and their parents (88% of colleges in the survey)
- record achievement: (67% of colleges in the survey)
- plan careers education, e.g. staff in one college are currently noticing less interest in progressing directly to HE because of financial concern. This has fed into the budgeting preparation offered to HE applicants in March each year and sparked a debate on supporting students wishing to enter employment (44% in FE colleges and 72% of sixth-form colleges)
- plan the curriculum (55% of all colleges in the survey)
- inform partner or feeder schools, e.g. one college produces a Progression and First Destination publication, which is sent to schools
- inform students on programme e.g. giving data on low cost HE institutions
- brief departmental staff on student success and destination trends
- inform individual interviews with potential students or those making course choices

Recommendations

- Colleges should ensure that information resources are accessible, regularly reviewed and updated, and meet the needs of students at different stages.
- Students' increasing use of databases and computer assisted guidance will necessitate review of other guidance processes.
- Careers services could help colleges interpret and use labour market and vacancy information more effectively. Colleges need to implement consistent procedures for collecting and using internal information such as destinations data to inform practice and benefit students.

Chapter 9

Conclusions and broad recommendations

Conclusions

Careers services often have a historical commitment to schools in their areas which makes it difficult to shift resources rapidly to FE. They also find it easier to achieve targets for interviews and action plans for young people in schools, where students are more accessible. Careers services in the project identified communicating within colleges as their main difficulty. Colleges could address this issue in order to make better use of careers service expertise. They certainly value careers service input and in the project identified good relationships with the careers service as a major strength of their provision. There was overwhelming recognition of the benefits of service level agreements, although there were some calls for targets to be eased and the needs of adult learners given higher priority.

Although the project did not attempt to make a direct comparison with the 1994 FEU survey of guidance in colleges, it is clear that there has been considerable development. For example, the appointment of new staff was the most frequent outcome of evaluating guidance provision over the past two years. Policies covering part-timers in FE were

doubled. Entry guidance, at or before admission, has increased rapidly since the introduction of FEFC's criteria for auditing entry units in 1994. It has been more difficult to earmark resources for on-programme guidance and support, although these activities are included in 'on-programme' units.

Personal tutors — in individual action planning and review or in group activities — play a major role in on-programme guidance. The picture in colleges is of a myriad people involved at different stages — some offering specialised and some informal guidance — from lecturers and personal tutors, to reception staff and vice-principals. There is clearly a need for appropriate staff development, to clarify roles, skills, referral options, etc.

Colleges in the survey maintained they played a larger role than careers services on programme, with the latter assuming more responsibility at the exit stage. Whilst there may be some duplication of activity, particularly where there are qualified specialists on college staff, the overwhelming message was that there were inadequate resources to meet demand. This is particularly the case with part-time and adult students, whose numbers can exceed 20,000 in some colleges. While not all will require individual guidance, there needs to be greater awareness of their statutory entitlements and development of cost-effective approaches.

Where careers services and colleges had articulated their complementary roles there was a clear benefit. The project found that more attention should be paid to students' experience, so that they can build on different processes of action planning and review, rather than repeating activities. The increasing independent use of careers resources, particularly younger students using software, also needs to contribute to a coherent guidance process. Although the case-study visits included interviews with students, more research is needed into their perceptions of careers education and guidance.

This is particularly true with careers education. The project found that for most students this took place in tutorials, and for others within a vocational programme or in discrete modules. Activities such as work experience, vocational projects and the development of relevant skills for handling transitions, often are not designated as careers education. At the same time, the project identified a growing trend to accredit careers education programmes, often to obtain funding, but with the spin-off of a higher profile and attention to curriculum development. The project results suggest a need for colleges to map what elements contribute to careers education, where it is taking place in colleges, what the aims and intended learning outcomes should be. This would lead to a more coherent experience for students on different programmes.

Even in colleges chosen as case studies the main problem was ensuring consistent development and quality across the college, so that all students had appropriate provision. A raft of strategies needs to be in place to ensure appropriate support for students throughout their time in college. The strategies are likely to include:

- policies and entitlements
- quality systems and targets for improvements
- regular monitoring and evaluation
- staff development
- careers education appropriate to different qualification routes
- preparation for both learning and work
- an information and IT strategy
- joint development projects with careers services

Recommendations to colleges

Policy development

The quality of careers education and guidance policies produced by colleges is very varied: practical guidelines on the development process and what should be covered would assist guidance staff in their preparation.

Delivering careers education and guidance on programme

Institutions need to work towards ensuring greater consistency and coherence in the planning and delivery of their careers education and guidance. They need to map where different components of careers education and guidance occur in their particular college.

Preparation for entry into work

Institutions should review the current division of their careers education programmes into progression into work and to HE, particularly in the light of:

- changing destination patterns
- the need for all students to be prepared to seek employment or further study, whatever their initial destination

Institutions need to review their provision for students on foundation and intermediate courses, to ensure that those not progressing on to further study can access adequate support early enough to plan ahead and compete effectively when seeking employment.

Institutions need to review their systems for collecting and updating labour market information in conjunction with the careers service, to ensure that all potential sources are tapped (including tutors on vocational programmes, work experience co-ordinators) and information made available to all students.

Better links need to be built between work experience co-ordinators and guidance specialists in colleges and with careers staff.

Preparation for lifelong learning

Institutions should review their careers education and guidance provision to ensure that students are made aware of the need for lifelong learning and how they may engage in further learning after they leave.

Institutions should ensure that students are aware of the changing patterns of work and careers and of the skills they will need to make effective transitions.

Integration of careers education and guidance into the curriculum and accreditation

Colleges should investigate the opportunities to enhance the profile and quality of provision through:

- clarifying the aims of careers education programmes
- defining the learning outcomes students can expect to achieve
- accrediting aspects of their provision
- integrating careers education into the curriculum (e.g. through the use of GNVQs, ASDAN, etc.).

Take-up of guidance provision

Colleges need to ensure:

- students are made aware of the support available to them at a time when they are likely to need it
- take-up of guidance provision by different groups and programme areas is regularly monitored, particularly where this requires the students to be proactive
- data collected is used to enhance provision

- students in all programme areas receive guidance appropriate to their needs

Early leavers

Colleges should ensure that procedures are in place for following up early leavers, and ensure referral on to appropriate sources of guidance.

Support for students excluded from the Service Level Agreement

Colleges should review the provision and take up of careers education and guidance for any groups of students excluded from the SLA, both internally and taking account of any appropriate external provision, developing links with other agencies if necessary.

Monitoring and evaluation of guidance provision

Colleges should review their procedures for monitoring the take-up of guidance provision, including usage of careers information and software by student age, gender, curriculum area, etc.

Institutions should ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate their guidance provision across a range of key areas. This should include targets for improvement and performance indicators.

College should consider estimating the 'value-added' offered by guidance and its links for example to retention and achievement.

Colleges and careers services should use the evaluation when reviewing the service level agreement and producing development plans.

Resources

Colleges should ensure that adequate resources for delivering careers education and guidance are earmarked across the stages, including the on-programme and exit stages.

Staff roles and responsibilities

The existing roles of college and careers service staff in institutions need to be mapped, together with those in external services (e.g. providing for adult clients), to ensure that they all mesh and that they work together to meet the needs of all students.

Internal networks or fora of staff engaged in formal and informal guidance work in colleges should be established to raise the profile and consistency of guidance and to support staff in developing provision.

Specialist staff in colleges need to make links between their appropriate external local guidance network and their own internal guidance community.

Staff development

Institutions should review their staff development and support programmes to ensure that tutors and other staff involved in guidance are:

- able to develop appropriate basic skills in guidance
- accessing relevant LMI in a usable form
- receiving adequate training to support entry into work and higher education
- able to take advantage of the new opportunities for accreditation of guidance skills

Colleges should liaise with careers service providers to ensure that they are drawing on all applicable funding for staff development, and in particular, funding from regional government offices.

Careers services and colleges should review staff development needs and identify common training needs for staff at all levels, and specific needs from front-line reception staff to tutors, senior managers, governors, and guidance specialists.

Colleges should ensure that guidance staff:

- working outside HE, albeit within an FE college or careers service, are adequately trained and supported to meet the needs of students on franchised HE programmes and link to appropriate networks
- can support adult clients

Recommendations to careers services:

Preparing students for transition

Careers services should work with individual colleges to build on the college's internal action planning and recording of student achievement, in order to avoid repetition and duplication.

Careers services should note how far colleges rely on their expertise and information for preparing students for apprenticeships and work - and ensure that their staff are drawing adequately upon their expertise and information on the labour market, to assist colleges in supporting students in these transitions. Careers services will need to retain and develop their work with employers if they are to support colleges in this way.

Careers services should consider how they can work collaboratively with colleges to improve the quality of careers education.

Staff development

Careers services should review the support and training provided to their staff working in the FE sector jointly with colleges, and in particular should ensure that staff undertake an adequate induction to be able to operate effectively in FE colleges.

Careers services should ensure that their staff are adequately informed about curriculum developments, including recording achievement and

action planning on programmes and the opportunities offered by programmes such as GNVQs and key skills to integrate careers education into the curriculum.

Resource allocation

Service-level agreements should be drawn up and reviewed after full discussion with managers and guidance specialists in colleges.

Careers services should ensure that priority groups (e.g. 16-19s) receive the same level of careers guidance in colleges as in schools. They should take account of rapid changes in patterns of post-16 participation.

Careers services should work with colleges to improve take-up of guidance interviews by students in order to make efficient use of careers advisers' limited time.

Recommendations to national agencies:

Careers education

Colleges would benefit from further research and advice on the core elements of careers education, its effective delivery, and where it is located in the curriculum.

Policy development

The quality of policies produced is very varied: practical guidelines on the development process and what should be covered would assist guidance staff in their preparation.

Impartiality

Research indicates that a shared understanding of impartiality, and its integration into working practices, is at different stages of development in different institutions. College staff may therefore benefit from an

exchange of ideas and guidelines produced by a national working group.

Research into student perceptions

FE students' perceptions of careers education, careers guidance and students' needs at different stages in college would benefit from further research.

Funding mechanisms and targets for careers services working in FE should be reviewed, taking account of the need for greater flexibility to:

- enable the development needs of FE institutions and their own priorities to be taken into greater account
- ensure that students receive the most appropriate guidance intervention
- enable services to contribute to the development of the quality of the provision, e.g. through developing a kitemarking process
- take account of the student profile at individual institutions, particularly in relation to age

Funding mechanisms for guidance in colleges may need to give greater recognition to the importance of ensuring the need to prepare students adequately on programme both for progression into other learning and for direct entry into work.

Revised inspection guidelines should encourage colleges to devise self-assessment measures of on programme and exit guidance.

Appendix 1
Methodology

The DfEE commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to undertake a study of careers guidance in schools and were also interested in gaining a clearer picture of what was happening in colleges. FEDA was interested in how colleges were supporting students after the initial stages of guidance. Both were interested in the contribution of the careers service to guidance and a joint-funded project was agreed.

The aims of the project were:

- to identify different approaches to careers education and careers guidance for students on programme and preparing to leave college
- to map the relative roles of careers service and college personnel within college careers education and guidance
- to examine how colleges monitor the delivery and quality of their provision
- to identify areas for development and make recommendations on good practice to colleges and careers services

The research was undertaken mainly between January and July 1996

The project was overseen by a steering group with a broad representation, which met three times during the project. Two surveys were undertaken, one covering the whole FE sector and the second a sample of about one third of careers services. Questionnaires for the surveys were prepared with advice from the steering group and included both open and closed questions. The research was conducted during the final phase of the transfer from directed to contracted careers services, so both were included in the survey: 14 (56%) were contracted and 6 (24%) were directed. Of the approximately 450 colleges in England and Wales 215 responded and of the 28 careers services surveyed, 25 responded.

Twelve colleges were selected for case studies on the basis of:

- indications of good practice and development in key areas identified by the steering group
- the need to ensure a geographical spread and representation from different types of institution
- a minimum level of representation from colleges in the careers service areas being surveyed
- colleges being inspected in the 95/96 year

Individual visits were undertaken in March and April 1996: some of them focused on a particular aspect of provision, others on the general approach to careers education and guidance for students in transition. A seminar for participating colleges was held in May 1996, at which guidance specialists had the opportunity to share good practice and identify issues which affected the sector as a whole.

The project findings were reported to the steering group and to participants attending a dissemination conference and their comments noted for the final revision of the project report.

Appendix 2

Checklist: reviewing careers education and guidance for students on college programmes

The checklist starting on the next page provides a starting point for a review of careers education and careers guidance for students on college programmes, helping them prepare for their next steps.

It does not explicitly address pre-entry and entry guidance but policy and provision should, of course, cover these stages of the student experience. Many of the prompts are still applicable to these stages.

The questions can be used as a basis for self assessment and forward planning. Each prompt can be considered under the following headings:

- current practice
- desired situation
- action needed to achieve aims
- timescale
- resources
- responsibility

A Policy

1. Do you have a written policy covering both full and part-time students?
2. Does it cover students' experience from before joining college to after leaving?
3. Does it cover both specialist careers education and guidance and contributions by non-specialists?
4. Did the local careers service and the college senior management team have an input?
5. Is there a statement of entitlement for students specifically for careers education and guidance or within the students charter?
6. Does the policy relate to any external quality frameworks (e.g. Investors in Careers) or national codes of practice (e.g. NACCEG, ICG)?
7. Does the policy relate to other college policies on equal opportunities, student support, etc?

B Quality

1. Do you have an agreed definition of impartiality and mechanisms for monitoring it in practice?
2. Do you have quality standards, targets and performance indicators derived from your policy?
3. Do they cover both individual guidance and careers education?
4. Are the standards and targets reviewed regularly (e.g. annually)?
5. What aspects of provision are monitored?

6. Which staff have responsibility for gathering and evaluating data?
7. Have you written a self-assessment report (SAR) for CEG?
8. Do you have a development plan for CEG?
9. Was it drawn up in consultation with the careers service, education-business partnership (EBP) or other external interests?
10. Are results of your monitoring and evaluation fed back to senior management and programme areas?
11. How are clients (students) involved in setting quality standards and giving feedback?

C Management and staffing

1. Is there a named senior manager and a governor with specific responsibility for careers education and guidance?
2. Do you have job descriptions and clear line management for all careers and guidance staff?
3. Do lecturers' and tutors' job descriptions reflect their responsibilities?
4. Have you mapped out the complementary roles of careers service staff, college specialists and tutorial and support staff?
5. Is the service level agreement an accurate reflection of responsibilities in college?
6. Are your staff up to date with the statutory entitlements of students, the responsibilities of careers services, and of colleges laid down in the charter, inspection and audit requirements?

7. How do you take account of college, department and student needs in negotiating the service level agreement with your careers service?
8. What arrangements do you make for students not covered by, or a low priority in the SLA?
9. What specialist staffing and provision do you arrange for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?

D Staff development

1. What level of professional and other relevant qualifications do your college specialist and support staff possess?
2. What level of knowledge and skill in CEG do you expect of your mainstream lecturers and tutors?
3. What initial or ongoing staff development do you provide for the above groups?
4. How do you assess staff development needs?
5. How do you deal with staff who are unable to give students a quality CEG entitlement because they are not competent?
6. How far do you use external (e.g. careers service) expertise, or funding, or joint training?
7. Are careers service personnel working in the college given induction and involved in college curriculum and staff development?
8. What particular advice do you give to mainstream tutors supporting students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?
9. Are generalist staff trained in when, how and to whom to refer learners in need of more specialist guidance?

10. What support materials do you provide for tutors?
11. Do you have any internal working groups or other mechanisms for bringing staff together with a common interest in guidance?
12. Do your specialist guidance staff belong to external networks, and if so, how do they disseminate the benefits of such involvement?
13. Do you use specialist staff as 'coaches', 'consultants' or co-tutors with mainstream staff?
14. How do you monitor and review staff development?

E Resources and information

1. Do you have designated funds for on programme and exit as well as entry guidance?
2. Is this reviewed in relation to identified need, and if so how are the needs identified?
3. Who is responsible for allocating resources to different aspects of careers education and guidance?
4. Who is responsible for monitoring take-up by student type and for tracking student progress?
5. Do you have standards for the provision of information for staff and students (e.g. for coverage, accuracy and accessibility)?
6. Is information geared to adults as well as 16-19s?
7. How regularly is the careers library updated?
8. Who is involved in providing labour market information (careers service, lecturers, employers, etc.)?
9. How is labour market intelligence analysed and presented to staff and students?

10. Who is responsible for recording and presenting information on student destinations?
11. Is this used to inform planning (marketing, curriculum development, careers education, etc.)?
12. How is careers and guidance information circulated through the college?
13. How is information provision on different sites evaluated?
14. What careers databases, computer assisted guidance, tracking software and other IT applications are used?
15. How are their use and usefulness assessed?

F Careers education

1. What are the learning outcomes of careers education?
2. How are the learning outcomes agreed and recorded?
3. Are the learning outcomes linked to acquisition of key skills?
4. Does careers education build on previous CEG, rather than repeat earlier experiences?
5. Have you mapped careers education content across curriculum areas, groups and individual tutorials, work experience, computer-assisted guidance, individual projects and specific careers activities?
6. How do you ensure embedded and discrete activities are coherent for the student?
7. How do you decide the balance of group and individual learning activities?
8. What support materials for tutors and self-study materials for students are available?
9. What accreditation is offered — and for which students?

10. How are students prepared for work as well as further study?
11. How do you prepare students for 21st century work patterns and lifelong learning?
12. How far are destination data and LMI used in planning areas of education?
13. How is careers education tailored to the needs and learning styles of different groups of students or individual student
14. What is the take-up of optional sessions?
15. How is careers education evaluated by students and how does this feedback into provision?
16. How do you identify and publicise the benefits of careers education for students and colleagues?
17. Do departmental plans take account of careers education?

G Coherent and progressive guidance

1. How far do individual action plans build on initial 'learning agreements' at entry, NRAs, etc.
2. What measures do you take to ensure that guidance interviews are linked to tutorials, careers education, vocational curriculum elements, etc?
3. How is action planning in the curriculum (e.g. in GNVQs) linked to careers action planning and the NRA?
4. How are guidance interviews and their outcomes recorded?
5. Who is this information shared with?
6. How do you ensure confidentiality for the students?

7. How do you make sure guidance is available to meet students' emerging needs, or do students receive guidance at set points?
8. What individual help is given to students who want to change track?
9. Who advises students on appropriate options on modular or credit-based provision?
10. How do you identify students who are at risk of dropping out, and what extra guidance do they get?
11. How do you encourage students to widen their horizons or try non-traditional options?
12. How do you ensure all students receive an equal entitlement (or do you distinguish entitlements for older students, part-timers, students with learning difficulties or disabilities, or other groups)?
13. Do all students leave college with an action plan or an opportunity to discuss next steps?

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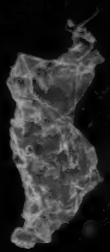

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